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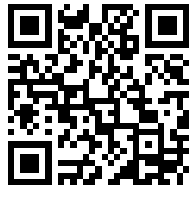

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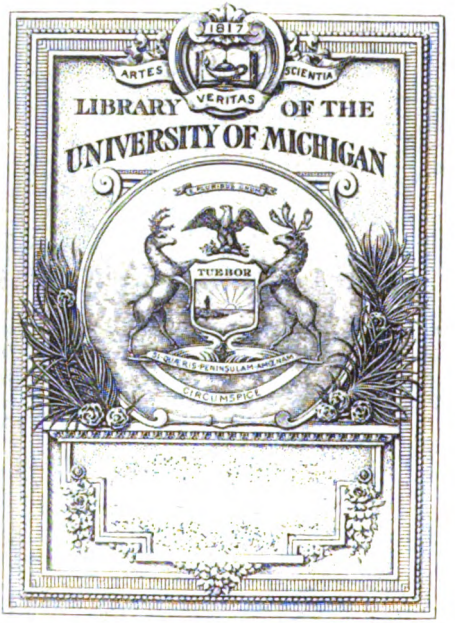

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THE AFRICAN SAGA

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BLAISE CENDRARS

THE AFRICAN SAGA

TRANSLATED FROM
L'ANTHOLOGIE NÈGRE
BY MARGERY BIANCO
WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY ARTHUR B. SPINGARN

PAYSON & CLARKE LTD
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INTRODUCTION

A generation ago the folk songs of the American Negro were listened to with an amused and almost contemptuous tolerance. And less than twenty years ago specimens of African Art, brought to Europe and America by missionaries and explorers, were regarded solely as crude examples of savage craftsmanship to be relegated to museums of "natural history." To-day the Negro Spirituals are recognized as noble numbers and by many accepted as America's only genuine and distinctive contribution to music.

African sculptures, no longer considered as hideous idols, have taken their place with Assyrian, Roman and Indian Art, and competent critics have not hesitated to declare the finest examples so rich in artistic qualities as to make them worthy to be placed beside the capital achievements of the greatest schools. African influence on Modern Art has been far reaching and the recognition of its value has given an impetus to the work of distinguished contemporaries in Europe and America that is well-nigh incalculable.

The traditional literature of Africa, collected assiduously by missionaries, explorers, ethnologists, administrators and philologists, has been considered from many angles, as religion, as folk-lore, as philology and as an aid to the study of primitive psychology. It is almost universally catalogued as folk-lore. Rarely, if ever, has it been considered as the expression of the genius of a people, and only incidentally, if at all, has it been read purely as literature. The canon has already become enormous and its latest and most ambitious collection, Leo Frobenius's *Atlantis, Volksmärchen und Volksdichtungen Afrikas* has already achieved publication of eleven large volumes out of the proposed fifteen. Its title indicates the compiler's approach and is typical of his viewpoint and that of his predecessors. To be sure, Frobenius and some of the others

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caught a gleam of its poetic value and its cultural significance. But it was not until the publication of the *Anthologie Nègre* in 1921 that this value and this significance became evident to the common reader. Blaise Cendrars, poet novelist and man of letters, saw its high imaginative qualities and importance as pure literature. He must have sensed the fact that most Africans are not "savages," that Africa possesses a civilization and a culture that is rich and varied, primitive, no doubt, but genuine and beautiful and that in its oral literature much of this has been preserved and adequately expressed. He may, perhaps, have felt this culture crude and barbaric when compared with that of Europe, but his sensitive and sympathetic genius must have convinced him that such a comparison is as unnecessary as it is meaningless. I think he assembled his stories and poems with this in mind and translated them into nervous and poetic French, striving primarily to preserve their deep and delicate sense of power and beauty. He gives, to be sure, the folk sources of his selections, but cares little whether they are garnered from Bantu, Haussa, Hottentot or Somali.

And so in this anthology we have not only a record of the wit and wisdom of Africa but the soul of a people, which may be judged by the criteria of pure letters. In this translation, which has attempted throughout to capture the spirit of Cendrars' book rather than to present an erudite rendition of original sources, English readers have their first opportunity to appraise Africa's contribution to the literature of the world. I venture to believe that they will find it not unworthy to stand beside American Negro Spirituals and African Sculpture.

ARTHUR B. SPINGARN.

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FOREWORD

After Heli Chatelain's linguistic researches on Ambantu, those of Buettner, Taylor and Steere on Swahili, of Schoen on Haussa, of Schlenker on Temne, of Christaller on Tshi, of Callaway on Zulu, of McAll Theal on Kafir, of Koelle on Bornu and of Bleck on Hottentot, Europeans can no longer ignore the fact that Africa is linguistically one of the richest countries in existence.

The following is the table, according to Cust, of the 591 languages and dialects of Africa:

1st Group: Semitic	*10 languages,*	*9 dialects*
2nd Group: Hamitic	*29 languages,*	*27 dialects*
3rd Group: Nuba-Fulah	*17 languages,*	*17 dialects*
4th Group: Negro	*195 languages,*	*49 dialects*
5th Group: Bantu	*168 languages,*	*55 dialects*
6th Group: Hottentot and Bushman	*19 languages,*	*6 dialects*

These 591 languages and dialects are extremely varied, and to mention only the 168 languages of the Bantu family, used by millions of natives from Kafiristan to the Gulf of Guinea, "they are," says Cust, "extraordinarily rich. Each hillock, hill, mountain or crag has a name, as has each water-course, each valley, each plain: to discuss the meanings of these names would take a man's lifetime. It is not the dearth, but the superabundance, of names which leads the traveller astray. Such is the fullness of the language that there are a score of words to indicate the different varieties of gait, of lounging, of swaggering; each way of walking is expressed by a special word."

Appleyard, Krapf and Steere are unanimous in praising the beauty and the plastic power of these languages, and Wilson observes in particular that "they are soft, supple, flexible to an almost limitless degree; their grammatical principles are

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founded on a systematic and philosophic basis, and the number of their words can be augmented to infinity; they can express the most delicate shades of thought and sentiment, and there are perhaps no other languages in the world that have more definite character or greater precision in expression."

The present volume is a work of compilation. For this reason I consider it a duty to indicate exactly in the bibliography the date and place of publication of the works upon which I have drawn. I have given these tales just as the missionaries and explorers brought them to Europe, and just as they are published. They are not always the most original versions nor the most faithful translations. It is much to be regretted that literary exactitude was not the only legitimate preoccupation of these distant travellers. In brief, the study of the language and literature of primitive races is one of the sciences most indispensable to the history of the human mind, and the best illustration of the law of intellectual constancy perceived by Rémy de Gourmont.

Blaise Cendrars.

Les Grands-Mulets, 1920.

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CHAPTER ONE

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COSMIC LEGENDS

1. THE STORY OF CREATION (*Fan*)

BEFORE anything at all was made, Mbere, the Creator, he made man out of clay. He took clay and he shaped it into a man. This was how man began, and he began as a lizard. This lizard, Mbere put it into a bowl of sea water. Five days, and this is what happened; five days passed with him in the bowl of water, and he had put him there, inside it. Seven days passed; he was in there for seven days. And the eighth day, Mbere took a look at him, and now the lizard came out; and now he was outside. But it was a man. And he said to the Creator: "Thank you!"

2. THE STORY OF THE BEGINNING OF THINGS (*Fan*)

This is what my father taught me, and he had it from his father, and so for a long, long time back, since the very beginning.

In the beginning of everything, in the very beginning, before anything was at all, neither man nor beast nor plant, nor sky nor earth, nothing, nothing, there was God, and he was called Nzame. And the three who are Nzame, we call them Nzame, Mbere and Nkwa. And first of all Nzame made the sky and the earth, and the sky he kept for himself. The earth, he breathed on it, and under his breath were born the land and the water, each in its place.

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Nzame made everything; sky, sun, moon, stars, beasts and plants . . . everything. And when he had finished everything, just as we see it now, he called Mbere and Nkwa, and he showed them his work.

"Is it all right?" he asked them.

"Yes," they answered. "You have done well."

"Is there something more to make?"

And Mbere and Nkwa answered. "We see a great many beasts, but we do not see their chief; we see many plants, but we do not see their master."

So to give a master to everything, among all the creatures, they chose the elephant, because he was wise; the tiger, because he was strong; the monkey, because he was clever and quick.

But Nzame wanted to do better still, and so between the three of them they made a creature almost like themselves; one gave him strength, another power, the third, beauty. Then the three said:

"Take the earth," they said to him. "From now on you are master of everything that is. Like us, you have life; everything is subject to you; you are the master."

Nzame, Mbere and Nkwa returned to their dwelling in the sky; the new creature stayed alone, down here on earth, and everything obeyed him. But among the animals the elephant was still the first, the tiger the second in rank, and the monkey third, for so it was that Mbere and Nkwa had chosen first of all.

Nzame, Mbere and Nkwa named the first man Fam, which means strength.

Vain of his power, his strength and beauty, for in these three things he surpassed the elephant, the tiger and the monkey, vain of having conquered all the other animals, this first creature turned out badly; he became proud, would no longer adore the gods and began to despise them, singing:

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Yeye, oh, la, yeye!
God above, man below,
Yeye, oh, la, yeye!
God is god,
Man is man,
To each his own place, let him keep to it.

God heard this song; he listened.

"Who's singing down there?"

"Find out!" replied Fam.

"Who is singing?"

"Yeye, oh, la, yeye!"

"I want to know who is singing?"

"Eh?" cried Fam. "Well, it's me!"

In a rage, God called Nzalan, the thunder. "Nzalan, come here!"

And Nzalan came running, with a great noise: "Boo, boo, boo-oo!" And the fire from heaven swept the forest. Beside that fire, all forest fires since are only torches. Phew! Phew! Phew! . . . everything flared up. The earth was covered with woods, as it is now; the trees burned, the plants, the bananas and manioc, even the ground-nuts, everything was scorched up, everything dead. But unluckily, in creating this first man, God had said to him: "You shall never die. What God has once given he does not take back." The first man was burned; what became of him after that I don't know. He is living somewhere, but where? My forefathers never told me what became of him, so I don't know. But wait a bit.

God looked at the earth, all black, with nothing at all on it, idle. He was ashamed, and wanted to make something better.

Nzame, Mbere and Nkwa made palaver together, in their council house, and this is what they did. Over the ground, all

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blackened and covered with cinders, they spread a new layer of earth; a tree sprouted, it grew . . . grew still more, and when one of its seeds fell to earth a new tree was born, and whenever a leaf fell off it grew and grew, and began to crawl, and it became an animal . . . an elephant, a tiger, an antelope, a tortoise . . . every kind of animal. And when a leaf fell into the water it began to swim, and there was a fish . . . a mullet, a crab, an oyster, a mussel . . . every kind of fish. The earth became once more that which it had been and which it still is today. And the proof, children, that my words are true, is that if you dig up the earth in certain places you will sometimes find, right underneath, a stone, black and hard, but which breaks easily; throw that stone into the fire and it will burn. For you know very well:

When the whistle sounds
The elephant comes.
Thanks, elephant.

This stone is what remains of the ancient forests, the forests that were burned up.

Nzame, Mbere and Nkwa, however, consulted again.

"We must have a chief to command all the animals," said Mbere.

"Certainly we must," said Nkwa.

"Yes," said Nzame, "we will make another man again, a man like Fam, with the same arms and legs, but we will give him a different head and he shall see death." And so it was done. That man, my friends, was like you and me.

The man who was the first man on earth, the father of us all, Nzame named him Sekume, but God did not want him to live alone. He said to him: "Make yourself a wife out of a tree." Sekume made himself a wife, and she walked about and he called her Mbonwe.

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In making Sekume and Mbonwe, Nzame made them in two parts: the outside part, this which you call Gnoul, the body, and the other which lives inside the Gnoul and which we all call Nsissim.

Nsissim that makes the shadow; the shadow and Nsissim, they are both the same thing, it is this Nsissim which gives life to the Gnoul, it is Nsissim that wanders about in the night when one is asleep, but Nsissim never dies. While it is in the body, Gnoul, do you know where it dwells? In the eye. Yes, it dwells in the eye, and that little bright speck you see right in the middle, that is Nsissim.

The star above,
The fire below,
The embers on the hearth,
The soul in the eye.
Cloud, smoke, and death.

Sekume and Mbonwe lived happily on the earth, and they had three sons. They named them: the first Nkoure (the stupid, bad one); the second, Bekale (he who thinks of nothing); and this one bore on his back Mfere, the third (he who is good and clever). They also had daughters. How many? I don't know, but these three also had children, and these had children again. Mfere is the father of our tribe, and the others the fathers of other tribes.

Fam, however, the very first man, God shut him up in the earth, and then he took a very big stone and stopped up the hole. Ah, the wicked Fam! For a long, long time he dug away; one fine day he got out. Who had taken his place? Other man. And who is in a rage with them about it? Fam. Who is always trying to do harm to them? Fam. Who hides in the forest to kill them, and under the water to wreck their canoe? Fam, the

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famous Fam. Don't speak too loud; he may be there this minute listening to us.

Keep very still,
Fam is on the listen
To make trouble for men.
Keep very still!

Then God gave a commandment to the men he had made. Calling Sekume, Mbonwe and their sons, he called everyone, big and little, great and small.

"From now on," he said to them, "these are the laws which I give you, and which you must obey.

You shall steal nothing from your own tribe.
You shall not kill those who have done you no wrong.
You shall not go and eat other people in the night.

This is all that I ask; live peacefully in your villages. Those who give heed to my commandments shall be rewarded, I will give them their wages, but the others I shall punish. Thus."

This is how God punishes those who do not obey him.

After their death they go wandering in the night, suffering and wailing, and while the earth is in darkness, in the hours of fear, they enter the villages, killing and wounding all whom they meet, doing all the harm that they can.

In their honour we perform the funeral dance, the kedsam-kedsam; it does no good at all. We set out for them the most savoury dishes; they feast and laugh, but it does no good at all. And when all those whom they once knew are dead, then only do they hear Ngofio, Ngofio the bird of death; they become all at once thin, very thin, and they are dead! Where do they go to, my children? You know as well as I do, that before crossing the great river they stay for a long, long time on a big flat rock: they are cold, terribly cold. Br-r-r . . .

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Cold and death, death and cold,
I would close my ears.
Cold and death, death and cold,
Misery, O my mother, misery.

And when all have passed over the sorrowful Bekun, then for a long time Nzame shuts them up in Ottolane, the bad place where they see only misery . . . misery.

As for the good ones, one knows that after death they return to the villages; but they are full of good feeling towards mankind, the funeral feast and the mourning dance rejoice their hearts. In the night-time they approach those whom they knew and loved, they bring them pleasant dreams, whisper to them what they must do in order to live long, to gain riches, to have faithful wives (just listen, now, you down there by the door!), to have plenty of children and kill lots of animals when they go hunting. The very last elephant I killed, it was thus, my friends, that I learned of his coming.

And when all those whom they knew are dead, then only do they hear Ngofio, Ngofio the bird of death; all at once they become fat, very fat—even too fat—and they are dead! Where do they go, my children? You know that as well as I do. God takes them up on high and sets them beside him in the evening star. From there they look down and see us, they are happy whenever we honour their memory, and it is the eyes of all the dead people that make this star shine so brightly.

This is what I have learned from my forefathers. I, Ndumemba, was taught it by my father, who had it from his father, and where the first learnt it from I don't know; I was not yet born. So.

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3. THE STORY OF THE SEPARATION (*Fan*)

In those days, a long time ago, there were not yet very many men on the earth. No, there were not very many, and all the families of the tribe lived in the same big village. The Creator had made man, and after him the gorilla, and then the monkey, and then the forest dwarfs, and then the other beasts, and they all lived together in the same big village; peace reigned among them, and it was Ndun who had charge of everything. When there was a palaver, either among the men or among the animals, they appeared before him and he judged with wisdom, for he was old and prudent, and his brothers helped him. The Creator often came down to the village, where he was treated with all honour, and talked things over with Ndun. Peace reigned in the village and the Creator was very pleased.

Good are the words of our forefathers!

But soon there came trouble. It came about in this way. Among the women there were a great many old ones, and there were also a great many young ones. Now when they set out for the fields the old women walked fast, very fast, and the young ones had to follow them. When they reached the plantations they had to work, and work a great deal. The old women loaded the young ones and the young ones complained to their husbands, but their husbands said they were wrong, and so did Ndun.

Work is made for women, and for all women alike!

But in the morning it was a different story. When the old chief came out of his hut, when the cock had preened his feathers and launched his cry from the roof top, then all the women, as they were ordered, took their big jars and went to the spring to fetch water. This spring was down in the bottom of the valley, for Ndun had built his village on a hill in order to be closer to

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the sun which warmed his old bones. The sun is a very good thing.

The sun shines, and the elephant comes into the world!

All the women went to fetch water, young and old alike. The young ones walked fast, and the old ones went slowly, very slowly, for they were afraid of slipping. (There were at least ten and ten and ten in the village, and perhaps more, many more; I wasn't there and I never counted them; my father had this story from his grandfather, and he didn't make it up, it came from long before his time.) As soon as they reached the spring the young women and girls hurried to fill their jars as full as they could, then they went into the water and bathed themselves and danced in the water. By the time the old women got there the water in the spring was all muddy, and as they were in a hurry to get back they had to take water and mud together. When their husbands wanted to drink they found only dirty slimy water, and they made a great fuss. It was all very well for the old women to explain, the husbands were very angry, and after the young women had had a few scoldings things went on just as before. The old women were spiteful in the evening, and the young women were still more spiteful in the morning.

Now one morning the young women were in a greater hurry even than usual; the old women, for their part, went slowly . . . slowly, for it had rained a great deal in the night and the ground was very slippery. When they reached the spring the young ones had already taken all the water and had finished bathing; as soon as the old ones arrived the young ones began to sing and make fun of them. And they sang:

Come on, come on, the one who gets there first
Can watch the one who comes last!
Run quickly, hurry up!

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Listen to the bones creaking, kwark! kwark!
Ah! Aha! The fruit is ripe!

And they mocked the others, crying "Bwa! Bwa!" The old women were furious! Hurry as they would, they were always the last to arrive, and when they finally got down to the spring the young ones had already left and the water was all muddied. Ah, no! That didn't please the old women at all! And so they had to go back as they came.

Oh! Ya! Oh! Ya! Oh! Ya! Phew! Take away our burden
The hill is steep, phew!
The sun is hot, phew!
Ah! I am old! Phew!

And when the poor old women reached the top, all out of breath and panting, the young ones, already seated on their doorsteps, mocked them and sang the same sarcastic refrain:

Ah! Aha! The fruit is over-ripe, Aha!

To endure these insults, to put up with this daily outrage, was more than the old women could stand, and soon blows were falling right and left: Yi, yi, yi! Kwas, kwas! Yi yi! The jars went flying, blood ran down. Some wept, others limped. . . . Things could not go on this way. Every day, fresh quarrels, every day, more blows. And soon, naturally, the men joined in. The young ones took the part of the young, the old ones were some for the old and some for the young.

The chief of the village said: "This can't go on any longer!"

All the warriors thought the same. It couldn't go on like this! Particularly as the women, both young and old, lost all their time making new jars to take the place of those they broke. To get the right clay for making pottery they had to go a long,

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long way. The men were ill-pleased, and the women more annoyed still.

The old chief of the village sent for the horn-blower.

"Take your horn," he said, "and go all through the village and call out the men." The horn-blower took his ivory horn and went all through the village, calling the men out. They all met in the hut of the great chief, and took their places on the mats. The women came too, but they were made to stay outside, according to the law; they watched everything through the chinks in the bamboo and they listened as well.

The palaver was long, each taking the part of his own relatives. At last it was decided this way: turn and turn about, each party should be the first to get the water. The first day the old women should go first and the young ones after; the second day, the young ones first and the old ones after. On this agreement they parted.

The next morning the young women waited impatiently, their jars on their backs. The old ones had their turn first. . . . And now a new trouble cropped up. The young ones waited, and they waited . . . not one woman would admit that she was old.

So the quarrels began all over again. . . .

So much so that, no longer able to decide the matter himself, the old chief made up his mind to go to the village of the Lord of the Race, the Creator himself, to put the whole question before him. He ordered his wife therefore to cook him some bananas and wrap them in cardemum leaves; he added a piece of pork, tucked up his loincloth and set out.

Bve, bve, he walked; bve, bve, he walked a long way. He was feeling quite contented in his heart, for all the signs were favourable. When he set out the mbva bird was singing on his right hand, and the cicada's fife greeted him on his way. The sun had passed the middle of the sky. The old chief climbed

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the big hill; he climbed with difficulty, for the path was very steep. At last he reached the great cave of the Thunder. In his hand he carried his protective fetich and at the same time he chanted the sacred chant, the chant to shield him from the fury of the spirit Nzalan.

O Nzalan, O Nzalan, Thunder, Lord and father, O Lord!
Father, kindly hear my prayers and accept my gifts.

I have eaten melan, I am initiated,
I am consecrated to the priests of the night.
Hearken, O Thunder, O Father, O Lord, Nzalan!

The old chief passed the cavern; he reached the village of God the Creator, and now he stood before him. He said: "Here is Mbola!"

And Nzame answered him: "Mbola, Chief of men. And so you have come."

"Yes, I have come, and this is what I ask. Peace has departed from my village; the women will no longer obey, the men will not listen to my voice. What is to be done?"

Nzame asked him: "Why won't the women obey? And why won't the men listen to your voice?"

And the old chief, leaning on his staff, stroked his plaited beard and began his story.

"O God, creator, master of all, you made me chief of the village of men. So far, so good! You created men, that too is good. But you also created women, and that is not so good. The men keep the peace among them, but with the women one can do nothing. It was you who created them, it is your place to give us back our peace! A woman and a porcupine, they are one and the same thing!"

And Nzame answered: "I will give it back to you."

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"Good!" answered the chief. "You can do it, because you are the All-Powerful, but without that . . ."

Nzame and the chief spent that day together. It would take too long tonight to tell you all they talked about, and besides . . . I wasn't there.

The next day the old chief came to Nzame and said: "I am going." And Nzame said: "I will go with you." So they set out together. They walked down and down, for a long, long time, and by evening they reached the village of men, where everyone was sleeping. And Nzame said to the chief: "Don't wake anyone up, don't tell anyone I am here. Tomorrow I want to judge for myself about the quarrel of these women." And just as Nzame ordered, so the old chief did. And they slept.

In the morning, the women went down to the spring to fetch water. The young ones, that day, went first, and the disputes soon began. From the top of the hill Nzame looked on. And the old chief said to him: "What are you going to do?" But Nzame answered: "It is I who command."

The egg can teach nothing to the hen!

When the women had returned to the village, Nzame sent for the horn-blower. "Go through the village," he said, "and tell all the men to appear before me. Call all the women too, and let them appear before me as well."

And all the men came, and all the women came also. And Nzame appeared all at once in their midst; the wind fell, and each felt the chill of death in his heart. And all were afraid.

Nzame spoke: "It is I who command all things."

And all the people replied: "It is thou who commandest all things, yea!

Thou commandest all things, yea!
Thou commandest all things, yea, yea!"

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"Good," said Nzame. "And I have come to put peace in the midst of my children."

"Thou hast come to put peace in the midst of thy children, yea."

"This, then, is what I shall do."

"This, then, is what thou wilt do, yea, yea."

"You have become too many to live together on the same hillside; moreover you have disobeyed me. I said to you: Live in peace and without quarreling. You have not obeyed me."

Here the men interrupted, crying: "It was the women who disobeyed!"

But Nzame silenced them. "Be silent, I am the master! Man is man, woman is woman. You will therefore part: some will go to the right, the others to the left. Some will go forward, the others will turn backward, and you will remain at peace."

But the old man Ndun, the chief of the race, felt great sorrow in his heart on hearing these words, and he fell down backward and was as one dead. His wives wept and began the funeral lamentations, but Nzame said: "I have taken Ndun to myself; since he is your father, he must remain with us. I am the master of life and of death."

And all answered: "Thou art the master of life. Thou art the master of death. Yea, yea, yea."

The Creator said: "Ndun still lives. But he cannot stay with you thus."

The people did not understand. The Creator repeated: "Some shall go to the right, the others to the left, and there shall be parting. Some shall go straight before them, others shall turn backward, and you will remain in peace."

And the people answered: "Very well. But the animals, what will they do? Will they stay in the village?"

The Creator said: "Take with you those that you wish."

And so they chose the dog and the hen. And the dog and

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the hen stayed with them. As for the others, the Creator said: "I will send them back to their forests." But the people complained, saying: "They will do us harm." The Creator replied: "Go and sleep in your huts, for now the night is come. Tomorrow you shall see 'the things that happen'."

And the next day they saw 'the things that happened'. And the things that happened were two.

The first was this. On entering his hut Ndun, the father of the race, felt a chill in his heart, for his people were about to leave him, and he said to his favourite wife: "I am dead." He lay down on his bed. The next day, he was cold all over, and his wives said: "He is dead." Nzame said: "I know. I am the master of life. I am the master of death. I have taken Ndun. Perform the funeral rites."

They performed the funeral rites. The wives began the lamentations and the death chant. The chant you all know; we have preserved it to this day.

DEATH CHANT

Father, alas, alas! Wherefore, O father, hast thou abandoned
thine hearth?
A man has killed thee, O father!
Thou seekest the vengeance of his death . . .
Thy shadow will pass to the other shore.

O father, why dost thou abandon thine hearth, O father!
The skies are lighted, the eyes are dimmed,
Water has fallen from the tree drop by drop, the rat has come
out from his hole.
This is the father's house.
Gather the funeral herbs.
Sprinkle on the right side, sprinkle on the left side . . .
A man now sees the invisible things.

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After the death chant the Creator commanded: "Take two wives, an old one and a young one."

They took them. And the Creator said: "Let their blood flow, for I am the master."

They let their blood flow, and they died. And when they were dead the Creator said: "Dig a deep hole."

They dug a deep hole. Then the Creator said: "Lay Ndun at the bottom."

And when he was laid there he said: "Now burn the two wives." And they burned them.

And when they were burned the Creator said: "This is called sacrifice. And thus you shall do again when I command you, for I am the master."

And they all answered: "Thou art the master, yea."

Nzame said once more: "It is well. Take the ashes and keep them always with you. It is the sign of mystery. I will protect you. Take the wives that are left, and cast them upon the body of Ndun." And they cast them on the body of Ndun.

"Now dance the funeral dances."

And when they had danced the funeral dances the Creator spoke again. "On the night that Ndun died, what beast did you see in your dreams?" And each of them had seen a beast, for so Nzame had willed it.

Each man therefore named an animal, and Nzame said: "It is well."

He lifted his finger, saying only: "I wish!" And the animals came running, one of each kind, according as each man had dreamed, and there were a great number. And each animal took its place beside each man, according as each had dreamed.

The creator said: "Let their blood flow." Each man took his sacrificial knife and cut the throat of his animal; the blood flowed and flowed, and covered the hillside.

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But Ndun's children complained, saying: "Why have we no animals?"

The Creator answered them: "Your heads are empty! Are you not the sons of Ndun, and my children? Your father was the lizard which I made in the beginning of all things, before there was anything at all. Why should you complain? I am tired!"

And the sons of Ndun were silent, for the Creator was angry, and they had the ashes of their father, Ndun. They said not another word. The blood of the animals flowed and flowed, and covered all the hillside.

But the men who had no animals still waited about. The Creator said to them: "It is well. Go, and cut down those trees you have seen in your dreams." They went and cut them down, and returned with the trunks. The Creator said: "It is well."

And these men, in fact, had not seen any beast in their dreams, but they had seen trees, each one a tree, each one a tree. And they laid all the wood one upon another, tree on tree, tree on tree, tree on tree. And the other animals were there, gathered from all the villages. Then the master of life spoke again.

"Put all the beasts on the pile."

They did as he bade them, and suddenly there rose that which we call 'fire', and it rose thus. When all the beasts had been put on the pile, and there were many, many of them, the Creator made a sign, and there came thunder; it burst forth and the lightning burst forth also; the lightning shone out and at once they saw a great flame arise, and the wood burned. And the Master said: "It is fire." And the men said: "Yes, it is well. Fire is good." And the eldest son of Ndun sang the fire song which you all know. And it was the son of Ndun who sang it the first time.

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FIRE SONG

Fire, fire, fire from the hearth below, fire from the hearth on high,
Light that shines in the moon, light that shines in the sun,
Star that gleams at night, star that cleaves the light, shooting star,
Spirit of the thunder, shining eye of the storm,
Fire of the sun that gives us light,
I call thee for expiation, fire, O fire!

Fire that passes, and all things die behind thy track,
Fire that passes, and behind thee all things live,
The trees are burned, ashes upon ashes,
The grass grows, the plants bring forth fruit,
Fire, friend of man, I call upon thee, fire of expiation.

Fire, protector of the hearth, I call upon thee!
Thou passest and all are vanquished, none can overcome thee.
Fire of the hearth, I call upon thee for expiation!

When all the animals were consumed the people, as they were bade, gathered up the burned bones, and after having ground them to powder preserved them together with the ashes of Ndun, each one his share, each one his share. And the Creator said to them:

"This is your sign of brotherhood." And the people said: "We like that. We are brothers of one race."

After this, they cast the ashes on the body of Ndun, and when the grave was filled the Creator said: "Go, and bring stones."

They fetched stones, and they put them on the grave, and the stones rose high, very high. The Creator said: "This is

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the Sign. When on your wanderings you see the spot where a man has been laid to rest, you shall cast on it a stone or a branch or a leaf. This shall you do."

And the people answered: "This shall we do. Yea!"

And when the stones were piled up high, very high, very, very high, the Creator said to the people: "This is the parting, and you must part." So the people parted, some to the right, the others to the left; some went forward, others turned backward, and none remained.

And this was the first thing that happened.

The second thing was this. It happened at that moment when the people were about to separate. The second thing, then, was this.

The Creator said to the people: "It is all over. I shall have nothing more to do with you."

They answered: "Pardon, oh, pardon! Thou art our father and our protector!" But the Creator answered them: "The spirit of the race will abide with you, strong and mighty; you will keep it." And they all said: "But the night is come."

"Then go to your huts and sleep."

All the people went to their huts, and they slept. The next day, early in the morning, they returned to the council house and the Creator asked them: "Did you dream?" They replied: "We have dreamed."

And the Creator asked: "What animal did you see in your dream?"

And each man had seen the same animal that he had sacrificed to Ndun. This was as the Creator had wished, for he said to them: "It is well. I am the master of life and the master of death. Go out into the village."

And they went out, and the animals came also, each animal after each man, according as each had dreamed. The other animals stayed in their villages.

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The Creator said: "Take your sacrificial knives and draw your own blood."

Each took his sacrificial knife and drew his own blood. And he said again: "Take your sacrificial knives, and draw the blood of the animal."

And this they did.

"Take the blood of the beast and mix it with your own."

And they did so.

But many were not content. All wanted to have the tiger for their blood-brother. So the Creator said: "Do not consider the outer body; each thing has its own virtue. I am your father."

And so it was done.

And on the morrow all parted, each with his own beast. The other animals went out into the forest, leaving the village where they had lived all together, and each established his own family. Each man left, taking his family with him, and there was no one left in the village, and each family had its own beast; it is into this that the virtue of the race enters after death. And that is why we Nduns all have the crocodile.

It is ended.

4. THE STORY OF BINGO (*Fan*)

It happened one day that Nzame came down to earth. Seated in a canoe which went all by itself, without any paddling, he followed the bank of the river. He came to shore near a big village, as he wanted to go up to the council house and speak to the men. But it happened that a young girl came to fetch water from the spring. Nzame saw her and loved her, for she was a good worker and as eager at her task as she was beautiful. He gave her a son and took her away with him, far,

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very, very far, into the country from which none return. Mboya —for that was the young girl's name—Mboya never came back from this land again.

When her time was come Mboya gave birth to a son, and she named him Bingo; I don't know why and no one ever told me, but it must be one of the names of that country. Bingo grew; he grew bigger every day, and Mboya loved him more than all the world. In his hair she twined the Eleli, the flower which the birds love; through his little nose she passed a twisted string of pearls; his neck and arms were decked with bracelets of copper polished carefully every morning.

Bingo grew, he grew all the time, and Mboya loved him more than all the world.

Nzame became very angry at this, and one day, irritated because Bingo had stolen a fish from his own preserve, he fastened Mboya in the hut, seized Bingo and threw him down from on high.

Bingo fell; he fell for a long time; he was already almost dead, when the waves of the great water beyond the mountains opened beneath his body, luckily for him. Better still, he found himself not far from the shore; a fisherman was there in his boat, with his nets for catching fish. He saved Bingo and took him to his hut. The name of this old man was Otoyom.

Scarcely had Nzame thrown Bingo over when Mboya rushed to his aid. Have you sometimes seen in the forest, at night, a wandering flame which moves wavering here and there? Have you heard a woman's voice which goes far off into the distance, calling, calling beneath the branches? Do not be afraid. It is Mboya seeking her child, Mboya who seeks but can never find him. A mother never gives up.

Bingo fallen, Mboya gone away, Nzame hastened in his turn. He wanted at all cost to find Bingo again.

On the sea he sought him. "Sea, sea, have you got Bingo?"

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On the earth, he sought him. "Earth, earth, have you got Bingo?"

And the earth and the sea answered: "No, no."

Impossible to find him. Otoyom, the great witch-doctor, had recognized Bingo's noble birth and did not want to give him up; he had hidden him carefully away.

BINGO AND THE SPIDER

In the very depths of the cavern Bingo had taken refuge; the cave was deep and dark. Bingo said in his heart: "Here, I shall be safe." And he stayed there a long while.

Nzame however continued his frantic hunt, and each day he said: "I will find Bingo again, and then I will eat his heart!" But Bingo was in the deep cave, in the middle of the forest. Nzame came to the forest; he met the chameleon.

"Chameleon, have you seen Bingo?"

But the chameleon, not wishing to compromise himself, said: "I saw a man pass by, certainly. But how should I know his name?"

"And which way did he go, where does he live?"

"He went now this way, now that; his home is on the other side of the forest."

"Was it long ago that you saw him?"

"The days are long; each day is a very long time. Yes, it was a long time ago."

Nzame went his way, much annoyed, and while he was searching here and there for Bingo's tracks the chameleon ran quickly to the cavern.

"Bingo, your father is searching for you; take care!"

And he ran away a little further, to the top of a high rock.

Bingo, warned, smoothed away carefully all the marks of his footprints from the earth; then, taking a well-trodden path,

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where the ground was hard, he returned to the cave. But he took care to walk backward, facing the way he had come. He reached the cave and hid himself at the very end, and at the same time Ndanabo, the spider, spun his web across the entrance, a strong thick web, and the chameleon hastily threw flies and other insects into the meshes of the web.

Nzame continued his search; he met Viere, the snake.

"Viere, have you seen Bingo?"

Viere answered: "Yes, indeed!"

"Is he in the cave in the forest?"

"Yes, indeed! Yes!"

Nzame quickened his steps; he drew near the grotto. "What?" he said. "Here are footprints pointing away!" And then he saw the spider web, with all the flies caught fast in it. "There can't possibly be anyone here," he said.

The chameleon called out to him from the top of the rock. "Ah, so you got here! Good-morning!"

"Good-morning, chameleon. Is this the cave where you saw Bingo?"

"Yes. But that was a long, long time ago. He has gone away. But I think you can still see his footprints, there on the ground."

"True," said Nzame. "Here they are. I am going to follow them. You have done very well, chameleon."

And he went off to continue his hunt.

When he had gone a long, long way off, Bingo came out from the cave.

"Chameleon," he said, "you have served me very well. This is your reward; henceforward you shall have the power to change your colour at will, and thus you will always escape your enemies." And the chameleon said: "That's good!"

And to the spider Bingo said: "Ndanabo, you have served me faithfully, what shall I do for you?" And Ndanabo an-

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swered: "Nothing. I am quite happy as I am." "Good," said Bingo. "Your presence shall always bring good fortune." And he went away. On his way he met Viere the snake, and with one stamp of his heel he crushed Viere's head.

It happened at last that Nzame, tired of his useless search, went back to heaven and left Bingo in peace. Bingo had learned the arts of his adopted father. When Otoyom died, he washed his body and buried it with every care, but first of all he took the skull, which he kept in the hut that he might honour it, and on all solemn feast-days he rubbed it with red pigments and polished it with oil. And because of this the spirit of Otoyom stayed with Bingo and dwelt with him; it was Bingo who first taught us to preserve, in the Evara, the skulls of our forefathers, that we may honour them and keep their spirits always with us. Shame to him who does not respect the heads of the ancients!

When he grew up Bingo travelled all over the world; he saw all the people and all the tribes. He was good himself, and he taught men to be good and to do what is right. He performed all kinds of miracles with a green stone which he wore round his neck. On this stone Nzame had written his name, and had given it to Bingo's mother, Mboya, on the very first day he saw her. And Mboya in her turn had given the green stone to her son. And Bingo could leave his body whenever he wanted to; arrows never touched him, axes could not wound him, the poisoned reeds did not pierce his bare feet and all the treasures of the earth were his. He loved the black men, and the black men loved him. They did just as he wished, and whatever he told them to, and that was a good thing, for Bingo himself was good.

And then Bingo wanted to go away, far away; he set out towards the country which lies on the other side of the mountains (I think it must be the country of the white people), and

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the men there, having seen how Bingo could open the earth at will, and how he knew all the treasures within it, spied upon him day and night. In the end, for Bingo knew they were wicked and hid himself from them, they surprised him one day with the green stone in his hand. And so as to possess his secret and have the green stone for themselves they killed him, and took the green stone, the green stone which he would have left to us. Ever since that day it is the men beyond the mountains who possess all the riches of the earth; but we, we others, we have preserved the laws of Bingo. Keep the customs of your forefathers, my children, for they are good. I have spoken.

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CHAPTER TWO

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FETICHISM

PANTHEISTICAL PERSONIFICATIONS

5. WHY THE EARTH WAS PEOPLED (*Efik*)

ABASI rose, sat there; made everything above and everything below, the water, the forest, the river, the springs, the beasts of the forest; he made every kind of thing in the whole world. He did not make man.

All the men lived up above, with Abasi. At that time there was no man living on the earth below, there were only the beasts of the forest, the fish in the waters, the birds which we see in the air, and many other beings which we have no need to mention. But man did not exist on the earth below. All the men were in exile, they dwelt with Abasi in his village. When Abasi sat down to eat they joined him and Altai.

At last Altai called Abasi; he answered, and she said to him: "Things are not right as they are now. You have the earth down there, you own heaven here in which they live, you have made a whole large place to dwell in and unless you make a place for the men too it is not right. Find some way of establishing them on the earth so they can live there and light a fire that will warm heaven a bit, for it gets very cold up here when there is no fire on earth."

6. THE ORIGIN OF DEATH (*Hottentot*)

The moon dies and comes back to life again. She said to the hare: "Go to man and say to him: 'Just as I die

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and return to life, so should you die and become alive again.' "

The hare came to man and said: "Just as I die and do not return to life, so must you die and not come back to life." When he returned the moon said: "What message did you give to man?" "I said to him: 'Just as I die and do not return to life so must you die and not come back to life.' "

"What!" cried the moon. "You told him that?" And she took a stick and hit him on his mouth, splitting it open.

7. DEATH AND THE MOON (*Sandaw*)

An old man saw a dead body lying in the moonlight. He called a number of animals together and said to them: "Which of you, my friends, will undertake to carry the dead man or the moon across to the other side of the river?"

Two tortoises came forward: the first, which had long paws, took the moon and arrived with her safe and sound on the opposite shore. The other, who had small paws, took away the dead man, and was drowned.

This is why the dead moon reappears always, but the dead man never comes back.

8. THE HUMAN RACE (*Masai*)

Three men went one after another to Ouende, to tell him their needs. The first one said: "I want a horse." The other said: "I want some dogs to hunt with in the jungle." The third said: "I want to refresh myself."

And Ouende gave to each what he wanted: to the first, a horse; to the second, some dogs; to the third, a woman.

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The three men went away. But the rain fell, so that they had to stay in the jungle for three days. Meantime the woman prepared food for them, for all three. The men said: "Let us return to Ouende." And they went.

All three of them then asked for wives. And Ouende willingly changed the horse into a woman, and the dogs into women.

The men went away. Now, the woman who came from the horse is greedy; the women who came from the dogs are spiteful; but the first wife, she whom Ouende gave to one of them, is good; she is the mother of the human race.

9. HEAVEN, DEATH AND THE SPIDER (*Agni*)

Heaven had a forest full of nettles. He said he would give his daughter in marriage to whoever should clear his forest. So the elephant came, took a big knife and began to clear the forest. But Heaven declared that anyone who scratched himself while clearing the forest should not have his daughter's hand, but whoever, on the contrary, should clear the forest without scratching himself should have the young girl.

So the elephant began to clear the forest, but all the same he scratched himself and he scratched himself. So Heaven's children came back and said to him: "The elephant has scratched himself!"

Said Heaven: "He doesn't know how to clear the forest."

And he took his daughter away from the elephant.

He called all the wild beasts; they came in vast numbers, but they could not succeed in clearing the forest without scratching themselves.

Then the spider said that he too would like to try. He began to clear the forest, and he said to Oure, Heaven's daughter:

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"Have you seen the ox they are going to catch for you to cook for my dinner? He is black *here*, and red *here*, and white *here!*"

And while he was saying this the spider scratched himself, but the children of Heaven didn't go and tell their father that he had scratched himself. And so the spider finished clearing the forest. And Heaven gave him his daughter in marriage and made him a present of an ox.

The spider said: "This ox belongs to me; I don't want the flies to settle on it and eat it."

And in order to kill his ox for dinner, he went to a place where there were no flies. He went a long way. When he got there his fire had gone out. He said to his little boy, who was called Aba-Kan:

"Aba, do you see that fire down there? Go and fetch some embers so that we can eat our beef."

Aba went to the place; it was Death there, sleeping. Aba-Kan saw Death's behind, all shining red; he thought this must be the fire, and taking a little piece of wood he went close to Death so as to ignite it. At the touch Death woke up and cried out: "What's that?"

Aba-Kan answered: "Papa sent me to fetch you so that we can eat our beef."

And Death came.

As soon as the spider saw Death he said: "Yes, I told Aba-Kan to go and call you."

"Well, here I am," said Death. "Let us kill the ox and eat."

So they killed the ox.

"Give me a shoulder," said Death.

The spider took a shoulder and gave it to Death, who ate it up in one mouthful, and then said to the spider: "Give me the whole ox!"

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The spider gave it to him, and Death, without moving from his place, swallowed it whole.

Well might the spider say: "I don't want the flies to eat my ox!"

But already Death had swallowed it whole, and there was nothing left for the spider.

That is the end.

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CHAPTER THREE

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FETICHISM

JINNS AND PRIMITIVE DIVINITIES

10. BOULANE AND SENKEPENG (*Basuto*)

THERE was once a chief's daughter named Senkepeng; her father had a servant called Mapapo. Boulane sent a great drought upon all the country; it never rained at all any more and all the springs dried up; nowhere could one find a drop of water. The people even killed their cattle and squeezed the grass that was in their stomachs to try and get a drop of water from it, but even there they could find none. One day Senkepeng's father, Rasenkepeng, said to Mapapo: "Go out and look for water; perhaps you will find some somewhere." An expedition was made ready; they loaded the oxen with all the meal they had, all kinds of provisions, and a number of calabashes in which to put the water. Mapapo and his companions journeyed a very long time without finding any at all; at last Mapapo climbed a high mountain and from there, far, far away, he could see water shining at the bottom of a gorge. So he came down from the mountain and set out in the direction of the water till finally he reached it.

He stooped to drink, but the Master of the water struck him on the mouth and prevented him from drinking; he tried to scoop some up in his hands, but again the lord of the water prevented him. Very much astonished, Mapapo rose and said to the Master of the water, who was invisible: "Lord, why do you stop me from drinking?" The Master of the water said: "I will let you drink some of it, Mapapo, if you promise to

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persuade Rasenkepeng to give me Senkepeng in marriage. If he refuses to give her to me, all his tribe shall die of thirst, together with all the cattle." Mapapo answered: "I will tell him; but meantime let me take some water." The Master of the water gave him permission. So Mapapo began to drink; he drank and he drank until his thirst was quenched. Afterwards he filled all the calabashes he had brought with him; then he emptied the tobacco from his tobacco box and filled that with water too. Then he took the calabashes on his back and walked all night until he got home to his master.

He arrived before dawn. As soon as he arrived he went to Rasenkepeng and said to him: "Chief, here is water." He added: "The Master of the water sends word to you that he desires to marry Senkepeng. If you refuse to give her to him, all your people will perish, and all your cattle with them; not a single living soul will remain." So they sent for Senkepeng, and her father said to her: "It is on your account that we are without water; it is on your account that all my people are dying. Mapapo tells me that the Master of the water wants to marry you; if we refuse to send you to him my entire people will perish through your fault." Senkepeng answered: "No, the people shall not perish through my fault; you may lead me to the Master of the water."

On the morrow, as soon as it began to be light, Rasenkepeng sent for all his people and told them what Mapapo had said. The people all agreed. They then gathered all the oxen together, ground quantities of flour and killed a great many cattle; the oxen were loaded with the meat and the flour, and young men and women were chosen to accompany Senkepeng. They all set out, led by Mapapo; it was he who was entrusted with bringing Senkepeng to her husband. When they reached the spot they unloaded their oxen, and laid out on the ground all the provisions they had brought. Now in this place there was

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nothing, not even a single little hut. Senkepeng's companions remained with her a long time without seeing anyone. Towards evening they said at last: "We must leave you, now, and return to our homes." Senkepeng said: "Very well, you may go."

They went, and she remained alone. Presently she asked aloud: "Where shall I sleep?" A voice answered: "Here."

Senkepeng asked: "Here? Where?"

The voice replied: "Here."

Senkepeng was silent; for a long time she did not speak, then she asked again: "Where shall I sleep?"

"Here."

"Here? Where?"

"Here."

She always received the same answer, up to the moment when drowsiness overcame her and she fell asleep. She slept soundly. She woke, and found that it was raining. She asked:

"It is raining. Where shall I sleep?"

"Here."

"Here? Where?"

"Here."

She fell asleep again, and slept until morning.

On waking up she found that she was lying in a hut. She had blankets, food, everything that she wanted; there was nothing lacking. Boulane (*he-who-opens-a-hut-full-of-dust*) remained invisible; she saw no one. The only thing she could see was the hut where she was and the things that were in it.

She lived a long time in this hut, without seeing anyone, entirely alone. At last she became pregnant, but without ever having seen a man near her. The month that she was to be brought to bed her mother-in-law Maboulane came to help her. Senkepeng then gave birth to a little boy. When the child was

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a little older Maboulane went back to her home, leaving her daughter-in-law alone as before.

One day Senkepeng said: "Perhaps I could go home and visit my parents; I want so much to see them again." The voice answered: "You may go." The next day she set out for her parents' house. As soon as she arrived everyone cried out: "Here is Senkepeng; it is really Senkepeng, and now she has a little boy, too!" She stayed several days at her home; when she left, her little sister, Senkepenyana, said to her: "I want to go with you." Senkepeng said: "Very well; we will go together. I am really very lonely." They reached Senkepeng's hut and spent the night there. The next day the elder sister told the younger to take care of the child while she went to the fields.

The child wept; Senkepenyana struck him, exclaiming: "Child of a father whom no one has seen! No one even knows where he is!" The father of the child heard all that Senkepenyana was saying. Another day Senkepeng said to her sister: "Stay with the child, while I go to the spring." The child wept; Senkepenyana beat him, saying: "Child of a father whom no one has seen! No one even knows where he is!" She scolded the child many times in this same way.

When she went to the hut and opened the door she saw a man sitting at the back of the hut. This man said to her: "Bring me my child. Why do you always scold him, saying that no one knows who his father is? I am his father." Senkepenyana saw that Boulane was clad in a garment of metal that shone so brightly it blinded her; she wanted to run out; she dashed herself against the walls of the hut. When she had recovered a little she ran out and fled as fast as she could.

Senkepeng returned, set down her jar of water, took a broom and began to sweep the lapa. Boulane called her: "Senkepeng! Senkepeng!" When she entered the hut she was ter-

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rified, and cried out: "Whence came this man all shining, clad in a mantle of iron, who holds my child in his arms?" She sank down on the ground. Boulane asked her: "Senkepeng, who is your husband?" She answered: "Lord, I do not know." Boulane asked her a second time: "Senkepeng, who is your husband?" She replied: "Lord, I do not know him." Then he said to her:

"It is I who am your husband; I am Boulane (he who refuses to marry, who opens a dusty hut), I am your husband. Your sister whom you brought here always scolds my child, telling him that no one has even seen his father; I am his father." That day Senkepeng saw her husband for the first time; Boulane took a mantle of iron and clothed his child in it.

From that day forth Boulane stayed with his wife and did not disappear again. The same day there appeared on the spot a large village, with a great number of oxen, cows, sheep, large baskets full of sorgho; all this rose from the ground. Senkepeng now understood that she was really the wife of a great chief, and that she ruled over a great people.

11. ARONDU-JENU (*Achira*)

Atungula-Shimba was a king. He reigned by right of heritage, and he had built eight new houses. But Atungula had sworn to eat all those who quarreled with him. He did as he said. He ate all his enemies one after another, until he was all alone in his kingdom. Then he married the beautiful Arondu-Jenu, the daughter of a neighbouring king.

Once married, Atungula made a habit of passing the whole day in the forest setting traps for wild beasts, and left his wife in the village. One day Njale, the elder brother of Arondu-Jenu (for Corambe, king of the air, their father, had three chil-

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dren) came to rescue his sister from Atungula-Shimba's clutches; but all at once the king returned unexpectedly and ate him. The second son came next, and he in his turn also was eaten. At last Reninga, the third brother, arrived. Between him and Atungula there took place a great battle, which lasted from sunrise until noon. In the end Reninga was beaten and his adversary ate him, just as he had eaten his two brothers.

Reninga however, who was wearing a powerful fetich, emerged living from Atungula's body. The king, on seeing him again, cried:

"How did you manage to get out of there?"

Then he smeared himself with magic chalk and said: "Reninga, take your sister."

After which he went and threw himself in the water.

Before drowning himself he had declared that if Arondu-Jenu married again, she would die, and his prediction came true, for the widow married another man and died soon after. Then Reninga, in his turn inconsolable for the loss of his sister, threw himself into the water at the same spot where Atungula had perished, and was also drowned.

At the spot where Atungula threw himself in the traveller, looking down at the bottom of the water, can see the bodies of Atungula and his wife lying there, side by side. Arondu-Jenu's nails are polished, and shine like a mirror. Ever since that day water has acquired the property of reflecting objects, and has taken the name of Arondu-Jenu. A person can also see his own image in the waves, on account of the transparence given them by Arondu-Jenu's nails.

12. THE WET SEASON AND THE DRY SEASON (*Kami*)

One day there was a great argument between Nchanga, the wet season, and Enomo, the dry season, as to which of the two

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was the elder. They went so far as to lay a wager on this point, the decision being left to an assembly of spirits of the air and sky. Nchanga began by saying: "Whenever I go anywhere, the drought comes after me; therefore I am the older."

Enomo replied: "Wherever I appear, the rain succeeds me; therefore she is younger."

The spirits of the air listened to their argument, and when the two rivals had done talking, they cried: "In truth, we cannot tell which of you is the elder, so you must be the same age!"

13. THE SPIRITS IN THE RAT HOLE (*Ganda*)

Once upon a time there was a great famine throughout all the country. The spider came out from the jungle, with her little one, to look for nuts under an old wall. They spent several weeks without finding anything; at last the young spider found a nut. Delighted, she broke it, when suddenly it fell from her hand and rolled down a rat hole. Not wishing to lose her prize, the young spider went down the rat hole to find the lost nut.

Three spirits appeared to her: a white one, a red one, and a black one; three spirits who since the creation of the world had never washed themselves, nor ever shaved their beards. They said to her:

"Where are you going? What are you looking for?"

The young spider told them of her misfortunes, and said that she had come down the rat hole to find her lost nut.

The three spirits said: "Do you run such risks just for a nut!" Then they dug up some yams and gave her a number of them, saying: "Peel these yams, cook the skins, but do not throw in the good part." The young spider obeyed;

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she prepared the skins and lo! they changed into enormous yams!

The young spider stayed there for three days and grew very fat. On the fourth day she begged the spirits to let her take some of the precious yams to her companions in misfortune. The spirits gave her permission, and sent her away with a large basket full of yams.

They went with her part of the way, and before she took leave of them they said: "You are now our friend, so we are going to tell you a secret. We will teach you a proverb, but you must never tell it to anyone."

So they began:

White spirit, hoho!
Red spirit, hoho!
Black spirit, hoho!
If my head were trampled underfoot
What would become of me?
He throws away the head;
He throws away the foot;
He throws away the head.
You have offended the Great Fetich!

Thus the spirits chanted; then they left the spider. When she got home and showed them the yams her father called all their friends together, and all expressed their joy. Delighted, they ate all the yams, and everyone grew very gay. After that the young spider often went back to the rat hole where the spirits lived who never washed themselves, and each time she got more yams.

One day the young spider's father wanted to go with her. The young spider would not listen to this. But her father did not take her seriously, and would not give up his idea. Dur-

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ing the night, while the young spider slept, he made a hole in her basket, which he filled with ashes. Next morning, when she started out with the pierced basket, her father followed her secretly by the trail of ashes which she dropped. Near the village he joined her.

"Well," said the young spider, "I see that you are determined to go in my place. Very well. Go, and I will turn back. But father, be very careful not to talk too much, and whatever you do don't try and pose as a wise man!"

And the young spider went away. Her father called out: "You take good care of yourself!" And he jumped into the rat hole.

The three spirits came to meet him, and asked him what he wanted. When the father spider saw them he burst out laughing, and cried: "Look at these crazy fools who never wash! Come, shall I trim your beards for you?"

"Are you trying to teach us wisdom?" cried the spirits. "In the first place, what are you looking for here?"

Then the father spider told them that he had come to get yams for himself and his family. Thereupon the spirits brought him some, saying: "Peel them, and cook the skins."

The father spider began to laugh, thinking: "That would be foolish indeed!" He put the yams over the fire, but they came to nothing. In the end he followed the advice of the spirits, cooking not the yams themselves but the skins, which at once turned into magnificent fruit.

After some time the father spider said: "I would like to go now." So the spirits gave him a big basket full of yams, went with him part of the way, and before leaving him taught him the proverb which they had already taught the young spider, but they told him never to sing it aloud. The father spider at once began to sing at the top of his voice; as the spirits were

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silent he thought they had only been murmuring some ancient rune of their own country.

Scarcely was he outside the rat hole than he began to sing out loud:

White spirit, hoho!
Red spirit, hoho!
Black spirit, hoho!
If my head were trampled underfoot
What would become of me?
He throws away the head;
He throws away the foot;
He throws away the head.
You have offended the Great Fetich!

At once he was taken with violent pains. He sank down, as though his head, his legs, his hands had all been cut off. But he still kept on singing. The spirits had pity on him, and woke him from this bad dream. But he sang again. Again he fell with this terrible dream before his eyes. And again the spirits woke him. But when he began the forbidden song for the third time the spirits took away his yams and gave him a good beating.

The village people rejoiced at first when the spider returned, but as soon as they heard his story they grew very angry and drove him away.

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CHAPTER FOUR

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FETICHISM

ANIMAL JINNS

14. KAMMAPA AND LITAOLANE (*Sesuto*)

It is said that once upon a time all the people perished. An enormous animal named Kammapa ate them up, great and small alike. This Kammapa was a most horrible beast. He was so huge that the keenest eye could barely see both ends of his body at the same time. There was only one woman left on the earth who had escaped the ferocity of Kammapa, and she was very careful to keep herself in hiding. This woman conceived, and gave birth to a son in an old cow-stable. She was very surprised, on examining the child closely, to discover some divinatory amulets hung about his neck.

"Since this has happened," she said, "his name shall be Litaolane, the Heavenly. Poor child! In what a time is he born! How can he escape Kammapa? Of what use will his amulets be to him?"

While she spoke she was gathering up, outside the hut, some fragments of straw and manure to make a bed for her infant. But on entering the stable, she nearly died of amazement and fright. For the child had already reached the stature of a grown man, and his words were full of wisdom.

Going outside, he was surprised at the solitude all about him.

"Mother," he said, "where are all the people? Is there no one but you and I on the earth?"

"My child," answered the woman, trembling, "not long ago

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there were enough men to cover all the mountains and valleys, but the beast whose voice makes the rocks tremble has devoured them all."

"Where is this beast?"

"There he is, quite near us."

Litaolane took a knife and, deaf to his mother's prayers, went to attack the devourer of the world. Kammapa opened his terrible mouth and swallowed him, but Litaolane was not dead; armed with his knife he entered the monster's stomach and slashed his entrails. Kammapa gave a horrible bellow, and fell. Litaolane began at once to open a passageway, but the prick of his knife-point roused cries from the thousands and thousands of human beings shut up there alive with him. Voices arose from all sides, crying: "Take care! You will cut us!"

He succeeded however in making an opening, through which all the nations of the earth emerged with him from the belly of Kammapa. The people, delivered from death, said to one another: "Who is this, born of a lonely woman and who has never known the joys of infancy? He is a prodigy and not a man. He has nothing in common with us; let us wipe him from the face of the earth!"

This said, they dug a deep pit, covered it over with turf, and placed a seat above it; then a messenger went to Litaolane and said:

"The elders of your people are assembled, and desire you to come and take your seat in their midst."

The woman's child went, but in passing near the trap he gave an adroit push to one of his enemies, who disappeared for ever.

The people said another time: "Litaolane has a habit of sleeping in the sun, near a certain clump of reeds; we will hide an armed warrior in the reeds."

But this ambush succeeded no better than the first. Litaolane knew everything, and his wisdom always overcame the

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malice of his enemies. Several of them, while trying to throw him in a large fire, fell in themselves. One day while they were chasing him he came to the banks of a deep river, and turned himself into a stone. His enemy, surprised at not finding him there, seized this stone and flung it to the opposite shore, crying: "If I catch sight of him on the other bank I'll break his head, like this!"

The stone became a man again, and Litaolane smiled fearlessly at the enemy, who could no longer reach him, but only vent his anger by cries and menacing gestures.

15. MURKWE-LEZA (*Subirja*)

They say that the rain-bird once had a wife. He said to a man: "I am going to marry your daughter."

"Marry her!"

So the rain-bird married this woman. Then his father-in-law and mother-in-law, who were dying of thirst, said to him: "Go and draw us some water."

He went, came to some water, and drank; when he had finished drinking he said to himself: "Now, what kind of a trick could I play on them?" And he thought: "I will put sand in the calabashes!"

So he filled all the calabashes with sand, then he took a very little water and poured it over the sand. When he got home he gave it to his parents-in-law. They were delighted to see the big calabashes all full, and said: "Today we shall be able to drink all the water we want!"

And the rain-bird said to himself: "I have played them a fine trick!"

His wife asked him: "Where is the water?" And he answered: "I have taken it to your father and mother."

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Then the rain-bird's wife said: "Pour some water into my cup."

The mother-in-law tipped the calabash; she saw that what little water there was went into the cup, and that there was very little indeed. So she said to her husband: "There is no water, only sand; there is no water!"

The father-in-law called his son-in-law and said to him: "Why did you bring sand instead of water?" The rain-bird said: "I tried to draw water, but there was a lot of sand there; some of it must have got into the calabashes."

The father-in-law said: "In truth, you have played us a bad trick!" And he drove him away, saying: "Go away, and don't dare to come near my child! From now on," he added, "you shall no longer drink water from the stream, but only dew and rain-water."

And so ends the story of the rain-bird.

16. SEEDIMWE (*Subirja*)

Seedimwe was a large beast who did harm to men. One day when the men had been setting snares for animals and had taken several in their traps they brought them back to the village and cooked them in their pots. Then they said to Seedimwe: "Come and eat!" But Seedimwe replied: "I am full."

Now this was a lie, for he wanted to eat it all up by himself, in the night. The men went to sleep. At sunrise, they found that Seedimwe had swallowed all the cooking-pots in the night. They asked: "Who has eaten our meat?"

They went back to their traps and found more animals, which they brought back to the village and cooked. The next day, they found that Seedimwe had once more eaten up all the pots.

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The day after they again brought meat and cooked it. This time the hare hid himself, saying: "Today I shall find out if it is our chief who eats up all the food."

During the night, while they slept, the hare lay down on the hearth, saying: "Here I shall see everything very well."

So when Seedimwe rose to gobble up the meat the hare called out: "I can see you, uncle!"

Seedimwe was scared, and lay down again. Presently he rose once more, while all were sleeping. But the hare was wide awake. And as Seedimwe sneezed he called out: "I can see you, uncle!"

This went on till morning. When the sun rose Seedimwe was lying down, ill. They called out to him: "Get up there, and we'll have some meat!" He said: "I don't want any; I'm ill."

The people ate the meat; they ate it all. Then Seedimwe rose, and found that there was nothing left. So he gobbled down the empty pots, and the men with them. The hare, for his part, had hidden himself in the grass.

When Seedimwe had finished eating the people he swallowed their houses, and then he went away. Then the hare gathered together all the other animals to chase and kill him. The first to set out were the eland and the zebra. They went, but all they could see was dust. So they came back, saying: "We haven't seen him anywhere!"

Next the lion and the leopard started out, but they could not catch him either. After them went the gâon and the white gâon. Then the antelope and the gazelle. All of them returned, having seen nothing. Next the wild dog and the hyena went. They knew how to find Seedimwe. The wild dog began to shout: "You eland, buffalo, hyena, antelope and leopard, you chased him a long way, but you didn't catch him, did you?"

Then the wild dog pierced Seedimwe with an arrow; the hyena also pierced him with an arrow; Seedimwe was dead.

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And the hyena and the wild dog went to find the other animals and fetch them to the spot; they called all the birds as well.

The eagle came first. He said:

Tjolo, ntjo, ntjo, ntjo, ntjo,
My beak is broken,
The one Samokounga gave me,
Samokounga of Leza!

And as he said it his beak broke.

The kingfisher came after him, saying:

Tjolo, ntjo, ntjo, ntjo, ntjo,
My beak is broken,
The one Samokounga gave me,
Samokounga of Leza!

And his beak also broke.

After him came the heron, and he also sang:

Tjolo, ntjo, ntjo, ntjo, ntjo,
My beak is broken,
The one Samokounga gave me,
Samokounga of Leza!

And his beak broke.

Next came the vulture, who knew how to tear up animals. He sang:

Tjolo, ntjo, ntjo, ntjo, ntjo,
My beak is broken,
The one Samokounga gave me,
Samokounga of Leza!

His beak, also, broke.

Then came quite a tiny bird, the katuitui. The animals said: "His beak is too small!"

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The little bird began to sing:

Tuere! tuentue! ntuentue!
My tiny beak is broken,
That was given me by Samokounga,
Samokounga of Leza!

And he made a tiny little hole in Seedimwe's body. When they saw the little hole the animals said to the katuitui: "Go away! Let a bigger bird come!"

So the crane came, and began to sing:

Tjolo, ntjo, ntjo, ntjo, ntjo, . . .

His beak broke. At the same time the little hole made by the katuitui closed up.

So the animals called the tiny little bird, the katuitui, back again. He returned and began to sing:

Tuere! Tuentue! ntuentue!

He made them a much bigger opening in Seedimwe's corpse. And the little bird sang again:

Tuere! Tuentue! ntuentue!

And he opened Seedimwe's belly. Everything that was inside came out; houses, pots, cattle and men. So then they rebuilt the villages.

17. MOSELANTJA (*Basuto*)

Once upon a time there was a chief; his village was very large, but he had only three children, a son and two daughters. The elder of the daughters married; there were left at home only

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the youngest, Fenyafenyane, and her little brother. One year, while they were working in the fields, the little boy stayed alone at home, and he used to play on the bank of the river, crying: "Koyoko, hurry up, come and eat me!" Koyoko then would come out from the water and run after him, and the little boy would run quick, quick back into the hut. This was his game, every day. One day everybody was away digging. The little boy went to the river as usual and began to shout: "Koyoko, hurry up, come and eat me!" This time Koyoko came out of the water very swiftly; he seized the little boy and devoured him whole, leaving only the head.

Meantime the little boy's mother said to her daughter: "Run to the house and fetch some seed." The young girl, reaching the village, discovered the head of her little brother. She began to weep and cry. "Alas, my brother has been devoured by Koyoko!" She went to the top of a little hillock and called aloud to her mother, chanting:

Mother, mother who workest afar,
Mother, mother who workest afar,
My brother Solo has been devoured by Koyoko; mother, mother who workest afar,
Mother, mother who workest afar!
Solo, the son of my mother, has been devoured by Koyoko; mother, mother who workest afar,
Mother, mother who workest afar!
My brother Solo has been devoured by Koyoko; mother, mother who workest afar,
Mother, mother who workest afar!

The mother heard her chanting, and said to those who were working with her: "Be quiet, so that I can hear!" They put down their spades and stopped. The young girl chanted again:

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Mother, mother who workest afar,
Mother, mother who workest afar,
My brother Solo has been devoured by Koyoko; mother,
mother who workest afar,
Mother, mother who workest afar!
Solo, the son of my mother, has been devoured by Koyoko;
mother, mother who workest afar,
Mother, mother who workest afar!
My brother Solo has been devoured by Koyoko; mother,
mother who workest afar,
Mother, mother who workest afar!

Then the woman took her spade and struck all her companions with it, laying them stiff and dead. The young girl continued to chant:

Mother, mother who workest afar,
Mother, mother who workest afar,
My brother Solo has been devoured by Koyoko; mother,
mother who workest afar,
Mother, mother who workest afar!
Solo, the son of my mother, has been devoured by Koyoko;
mother, mother who workest afar,
Mother, mother who workest afar!
My brother Solo has been devoured by Koyoko; mother,
mother who workest afar,
Mother, mother who workest afar!

Then the mother began once more striking the bodies of her companions with her spade; not one was left alive. Then she set out to return to the village; as she went she gathered up scorpions, centipedes, earwigs and poisonous spiders, and put them in her bag. When she got home she found Koyoko so full that he could not move. She set down in front of the hut the

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sack which she had filled with scorpions and venomous insects; then she entered and began to search among her belongings. She collected the finest of her pearl necklaces and metal rings, and put them on one side. Then she came out of the hut, gathered dry grass and made great trusses which she bound with cords and placed against the walls of the hut.

Then she said to Koyoko: "Come here, and I will shave your head." When Koyoko came she took a lancet and began to cut and tear the flesh on his head; she then untied her sack. The scorpions and venomous insects came out in clusters and crawled into his ears, mouth and eyes, biting and stinging him to death.

Then she called her daughter, and said to her: "Come here." She decked her in the pearl necklaces and rings, and told her: "Now, my child, go to your sister Hlakatsabele, wife of Masilo; but above all be sure and don't turn round to look behind you. Whatever happens, follow the path and always go straight ahead."

The young girl set out and walked for a long, long time. Presently she said to herself: "I wonder why my mother forbade me to look behind; I must see what it is! Perhaps she wants to set fire to the hut and kill herself."

She turned round, and saw a great smoke mounting to the sky. She cried: "Alas, my mother has set fire to the hut and burned herself alive!" And she heard, quite close to her, a voice repeating: "Alas, my mother has set fire to the hut and burned herself alive!" She looked, and saw a strange animal; she was surprised, and asked: "Where did this animal come from?" The voice continued: "Lend me your pearl necklaces and clothes for a little while, so I can see how they suit me." The young girl took off her clothes and gave them to Moselantja; Moselantja put them on, and gave the young girl the rags with which she herself was covered.

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When they drew near the village the young girl said: "Now give me back my clothes."

"Not yet; I will return them at the pasture gate."

When they reached the pasture where the cattle grazed the young girl said again: "Now give me my clothes!"

"What? Do you want people to say that Masilo's womenfolk quarrel about nothing on the open road!"

In this manner they finally reached the home of Hlakatsabele, the elder sister of Fenyafenyane. Moselantja hastened to say (Fenyafenyane for her part feeling very much ashamed and keeping silence): "My mother told me to come to you; our brother has been devoured by Koyoko and my mother has set fire to the hut and burned herself alive."

Hlakatsabele said to herself: "What can have changed my sister like this? I no longer recognize her, and yet her clothes and ornaments are certainly those of our family." In the end however she persuaded herself that it really was her sister. Moselantja continued, pointing to Fenyafenyane: "This person here is Moselantja; I met her on the road, and she actually wanted me to take off my fine clothes and give them to her!"

In this way Moselantja managed to pass herself off as Fenyafenyane.

At nightfall Hlakatsabele sent Fenyafenyane to sleep in the hut of an old woman, but she kept Moselantja with her. During the night, Moselantja's tail lengthened itself out, and began feeling about in all the corners of the hut for the food that was kept there. Masilo called out: "What's that?" And immediately Moselantja cried: "Oh, Masilo, come and help me! I feel so bad, I have dreadful colics!" The next day, as soon as it was light, Masilo exclaimed: "Who has taken all our food? Who could have done that!" Moselantja replied: "It must have been Moselantja; she is a great thief, she steals everywhere she goes." When they sat down to eat they gave Fenyafenyane

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her food in an old chipped porringer, so dirty she could not touch it; as for Moselantja, she ate from a beautiful new bowl.

Spring went by; they weeded the fields; then came the season for driving away the birds. Hlakatsabele ordered her sister, whom she believed all the time to be Moselantja, to go to her field and frighten the birds away. This field was next to the field belonging to the old woman who had given Fenyafenyane shelter. At midday Hlakatsabele sent Moselantja to take some food to Fenyafenyane, but Moselantja ate it all herself on the way. When she reached the field where Fenyafenyane was keeping guard she said to her: "Why are you sleeping like that, you lazy slut? Don't you see that the birds are eating all my husband's sorgho, the sorgho that belongs to Masilo!" When Moselantja had gone, Fenyafenyane climbed up again on her little hillock of earth, which was quite near that of the old woman who had given her shelter. She stood up as tall as she could and began to sing:

Go away, dove! Go away, dove!
Today they call me Moselantja; go away, dove! Go away, dove!
Once I was Fenyafenyane, sister of Hlakatsabele; go away, dove! Go away, dove!
Today they give me my food in a dirty porringer; go away, dove! Go away, dove!
Reed, take flight, that I may go to my father and my mother!

Then the reed waved itself about, took her and lifted her up to carry her away on the air. But the old woman came running up and caught hold of her. Fenyafenyane cried: "Let me go to my father and mother! Don't you see that today I am reduced to eating my food from a dirty chipped porringer? It is as though Hlakatsabele were not my sister!"

In this way she gave the old woman to understand who she was; she said to her: "At home one day, when everyone was

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working in the fields, my little brother went to the stream to tease Koyoko, who came out and devoured him. Then my mother told me to come here, warning me sternly not to look behind me. But I turned round to see what was happening, and scarcely had I cried out: 'Alas, my mother has set fire to the hut and burned herself alive!' than I heard a voice quite close to me, at my feet, Moselantja's voice, saying: 'Alas, my mother has set fire to the hut and burned herself alive!' Then Moselantja asked me to lend her my clothes, and I agreed, because she promised to give them back. It was thus we arrived here; she passed herself off for me, and it was she who told how my mother was burned with the hut."

The old women asked her: "How is it then that your sister cannot tell from your face that you are her sister?" Fenyafenyane replied: "I do not know." The old woman did not answer; she went to fetch her dinner, and shared it with Fenyafenyane. That day the old woman said nothing either to Masilo or Hlakatsabele; she spoke to no one of what she had seen and heard.

That evening they gave Fenyafenyane her supper as usual in a chipped and dirty porringer, but she did not touch it. In Masilo's household they had killed an ox and cooked the meat. During the night Moselantja's tail reached out and began to eat up all the meat. Masilo heard it and said: "What's making all that noise among the meat pots?" He got up to go and see, but Moselantja cried out at once: "Oh, Masilo, help me, I have such terrible colics! Help me, Masilo, I can't bear it any longer!"

The next day Fenyafenyane returned to her sister's field; this time it was her sister Hlakatsabele who brought her her dinner; she gave it to her, as always, in a chipped and dirty old porringer. Fenyafenyane put it aside without touching it; the old woman still said nothing. When Hlakatsabele had gone,

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Fenyafenyane mounted her hillock of earth again, and standing up as tall as she could, she began to sing:

Go away, dove! Go away, dove!
Today they call me Moselantja; go away, dove! Go away, dove!
Once I was Fenyafenyane, sister of Hlakatsabele; go away, dove! Go away, dove!
Today they make me eat from a dirty porringer; go away, dove! Go away, dove!
Reed, take flight, that I may go to my father and mother!

Then the reed moved, took her and lifted her up to carry her away on the air, but the old woman ran and caught hold of her. Fenyafenyane said: "Let me go to my father and mother!"

In the evening the old woman went to Masilo and said to him: "Come tomorrow to the fields, and you will see what I saw today." Masilo asked her: "What is that?" The old woman replied: "You shall see for yourself what it is."

The next day Masilo went secretly to the fields and hid himself where the old woman had told him. Hlakatsabele again sent Moselantja to bring Fenyafenyane her dinner, but Moselantja sat down by the side of the road and ate everything that had been given her. When she came to Fenyafenyane she said to her: "You lazy slut, why are you sleeping? Don't you see that the birds are eating all my husband's sorgho!" Then she returned to the village.

The old woman said to Fenyafenyane: "Don't you see the doves down there in the field? Go and drive them away." Fenyafenyane went, mounted her hillock of earth, and making herself as tall as she could, began to sing:

Go away, dove! Go away, dove!
Today they call me Moselantja; go away, dove! Go away, dove!

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Long ago I was Fenyafenyane, sister of Hlakatsabele; go away, dove! Go away, dove!
Today they feed me from dirty porringers; go away, dove! Go away, dove!
Reed, take flight, that I may go to my father and mother!

Then the reed rustled loudly, and lifted her up to bear her away on the air. Masilo ran and seized hold of her. Fenyafenyane said to him: "Let me go, that I may go to my father and mother! Your wife has treated me very badly, although she is my sister and I took refuge with her." Then the old woman said to Masilo: "You see, Masilo: this is what I told you to come and see here!" Masilo stayed a long time with Fenyafenyane; they wept for a long time together. Then he returned to the village and told his wife everything. She cried: "Alas, my poor sister! Alas, daughter of my father!"

The next day Masilo told all his people to gather a quantity of wood, while others dug a deep pit. They killed cattle, sheep and goats, baked bread, cooked sorgho in milk, fried crusts of bread in fat; they prepared a great feast. They brought also a great many pots of curds; these they put at the bottom of the pit they had dug, covering them with cornstalks and light branches. Meanwhile the young women of the village gathered some wood in the forest. Moselantja, for her part, did nothing at all; she just squatted near the stream, where her tail went hunting for crabs, which she devoured greedily. When the young women had finished they said: "Let's return to the village." One of them asked: "Where is the chief's wife? Where is the wife of Masilo?" They carried each a faggot of dry branches; Fenyafenyane's was larger than the rest. When Moselantja saw them coming she hastily gathered together some green shoots and made a bundle; then she said to Fenyafenyane: "Moselantja, you have taken my faggot; give it back to

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me!" But the other women cried: "What do you mean? It's hers; she gathered it herself. As for you, where did you hide yourself all the time we were working? Come on to the village!"

When they drew near the village the people said to one another: "Look at the chief's wife, bringing only green branches! What does she think she'll do with those!"

Then Masilo said to all the women: "Let each of you jump over this hole." And he pointed to the deep hole where they had hidden the curds.

The women all jumped, one after another, and Fenyafenyane jumped with the rest. When it came to the turn of the chief's wife, and she wanted to jump, her tail reached down towards the curds and began to eat them, so Moselantja fell to the bottom of the hole. The chief's people came running: they hemmed her in on all sides and killed her on the spot.

But she did not die entirely; from the spot where she was killed there grew a wild pumpkin.

As for Fenyafenyane, she became the wife of Masilo; after a certain time she gave birth to a son. One day when everyone else was in the fields and Fenyafenyane had stayed alone in the house, this wild pumpkin detached itself from its stalk and came rolling towards Fenyafenyane's hut. As it rolled it said: "Pi-ti-ki, pi-ti-ki, we-will-eat-up-the-pap-of-the-fat-woman-in-child-bed-the-wife-of-Ma-si-lo!" When it reached Fenyafenyane the pumpkin said to her: "Lay my husband's child down beside me." Fenyafenyane put the child down on the ground; then the pumpkin hurled itself furiously on Fenyafenyane and beat her, beat her for a long time. When it had finished beating her the pumpkin went back to the place it had come from and replaced itself on its stalk.

Fenyafenyane said nothing to anyone of what had happened. The next day, when everyone had gone to the fields, the pumpkin

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again rolled toward Fenyafenyane's hut, and as it rolled it said: "Pi-ti-ki, pi-ti-ki, we-will-eat-up-the-pap-of-the-fat-woman-in-child-bed-the-wife-of-Ma-si-lo!" It said to Fenyafenyane: "Lay my husband's child down beside me." Then it flung itself on Fenyafenyane and gave her a long, long beating; after it had finished beating her it went away as before. In this way the pumpkin persecuted Fenyafenyane day by day, giving her no peace.

At last one day Masilo asked his wife: "What is the matter with you, why do you grow so thin?" Fenyafenyane answered: "Over there is a wild pumpkin that, while you are in the fields, comes to me and says: 'Pi-ti-ki, pi-ti-ki, we-will-eat-up-the-pap-of-the-fat-woman-in-child-bed-the-wife-of-Ma-si-lo!' Then it says to me: 'Lay down my husband's child beside me.' Then it throws itself on me and beats me furiously."

The next day Masilo did not go to the fields; when everyone else had left he told his wife to hide him among the child's mats. The pumpkin came as usual, saying:

"Pi-ti-ki, pi-ti-ki, we-will-eat-up-the-pap-of-the-fat-woman-in-child-bed-the-wife-of-Ma-si-lo." Then, when Fenyafenyane had laid her child down on the ground it threw itself upon her and began striking her in rage. Then Masilo sprang up from his hiding place, armed with an ax and an assegai. He pierced the pumpkin with a stroke of the assegai, and a stream of blood came out. Then he took it, carried it in front of the hut and chopped it into tiny pieces, which he afterwards burned as carefully as possible.

A thistle grew up on the spot where the pumpkin had been burned. The thistle grew, without anyone paying attention to it, and finally came to seed. These seeds injured the child; whenever he ran about outside they pricked his feet. No matter how often one swept them away there always remained one that could not be caught. At last Masilo hid himself in ambush,

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seized it and threw it on the fire, but it turned to a pumpkin seed. When the child slept, it jumped on him and bit him, then returned to hide itself in the reeds near the hut. After a long time Masilo succeeded in laying hands on this pumpkin seed; he carefully crushed it on a millstone, ground it to fine powder and threw it on the fire. This was the end of Moselantja.

18. THE BIRD THAT MADE MILK (*Bakalong*)

Long ago, in a certain place, there was a large town where dwelt a number of people. They lived entirely on grain. One year there was a great famine. In this town lived a poor man named Masilo, and his wife. One day they went out to dig in their field, and they dug and they dug, all day long. At night, when everybody who worked in the fields went home, they went with them. Presently there came a bird, who perched on the hut at the end of the field. He began to whistle, saying: "Field cultivated by Masilo, return as you were!"

The field did as the bird told it. After that the bird flew away.

The next day when Masilo and his wife went to their field they looked at it doubtfully, saying: "Is this really the field where we dug all day yesterday?"

They could tell that it really was the same place by the people working on either side. These people now began to laugh and make fun of them, saying: "Aren't you lazy!"

Once more they dug and they dug, all that day, and when evening came they went home with the others.

Then the bird came and did the same thing over again.

When they went out to work next morning they found their field once more changed back as it was, and they thought they must be bewitched. They began again to dig all day long, all

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day long. But at nightfall, when the people went away, Masilo said to his wife: "You go back to the house; I shall stay behind to find out what sort of being it is that destroys our labour."

So she went. He lay down at the end of the field under the same hut where the bird always perched. While he was thinking things over the bird arrived. It was a fine bird. The man looked at it with admiration. It began to talk. It said: "Field cultivated by Masilo, return as you were!"

Then Masilo seized the bird and cried: "Ah, so it is you who destroys the work of our hands!"

He drew his knife from the sheath and was about to cut off the bird's head. But the bird said: "If you please, don't kill me; I will make plenty of milk to feed you." Masilo replied: "First of all you must restore the work of my hands!"

The bird said: "Field cultivated by Masilo, reappear!" And the cultivation reappeared.

Then Masilo said: "Now make me some milk."

And at once it made some rich milk which Masilo began to drink. When he had enough he carried the bird to the house, but just before he reached it he put the bird in his sack.

He went into the house and said to his wife: "Wash the largest beer jars that we have in the house, wash them all!" But his wife was ill-tempered through hunger, and she asked: "What have you got to fill so many big jars?" Masilo answered: "Just listen to me, and do as I tell you; you will see."

When she had prepared the pots Masilo took the bird out of his sack, and said: "Make some milk to feed my children." And the bird filled all the beer pots full of milk. They began to eat, and when they had finished Masilo warned his children. "Be very careful never to breathe anything at all of this, even to one of your companions." They swore to him that they would say nothing.

In this way, thanks to the bird, Masilo and his family were

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able to live. The neighbours were surprised when they saw them, and said: "How is it that they keep so fat in Masilo's household? He is so poor! But now, since his field is cultivated he and his children are so fat!" They tried to spy on him and see what he ate, but could find out nothing at all.

One morning Masilo and his wife went to work in their garden and, at midday of that same day, the children of the village gathered together to play. It so happened that they met to play just in front of Masilo's house, with Masilo's children.

The other children asked: "Why are you all so fat, while we keep so thin?" They replied: "Are we fat? We thought we were thin like you."

They did not want to tell the reason. The other children continued to press them, saying: "We won't tell anyone."

So Masilo's children said: "In our father's house there is a bird that makes milk."

The others said: "Please show it to us!"

So they went into the house and drew the bird from its hiding place. They placed it as their father was wont to do, and the bird made some rich milk which they drank, drank with their companions. They were very hungry.

After they had drunk they said to the bird: "Now dance for us!" The bird began to dance in the house. But one of the children said: "There is not enough room here!" So they took it outside. While they were all playing and laughing the bird flew away. Masilo's children cried: "Our father will kill us when he comes back; we must run after the bird!"

So they followed, and kept running the whole day, for when they were at a certain distance the bird sat still for some time, but whenever they came near it flew further away.

When those who worked in the fields returned from their labour the village people called their children, for they did not know what had become of them.

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As soon as Masilo entered his house and missed the bird he guessed where the children were, but he said nothing to the parents. He was very sad on account of the bird, for he knew that he had lost his food.

At nightfall the children decided to return to the house, but a storm of rain and thunder overtook them and they were very frightened. Among them was a brave boy named Masemanyamatoug, who kept up their courage by saying: "Don't be frightened; I can command a house to build itself up for us." They said: "Please, please do!"

He commanded: "House, appear!"

It appeared, and also wood to make a fire. So the children entered the house, built a big fire and began to roast some wild roots that they had dug up.

While they were roasting these, feeling very happy, an enormous cannibal came and they heard his voice, saying: "Masemanyamatoug, give me some of those wild roots you have." They were very, very frightened at this, and the brave boy said to the other boys and girls: "Pass me your roots." They gave them to him, and he threw them outside.

While the cannibal was quietly eating them the children crept out and ran away. The cannibal, having finished his roots, dashed after them. When he was quite near they scattered several roots on the ground, and while he gathered these up and ate them they fled still further.

At last they reached the mountains where the trees grew. The girls were by this time very tired, so they all climbed up on a large tree. The cannibal came and tried to cut down the tree with his sharp finger-nail.

Then the brave boy said to the girls: "While I sing, you must keep on repeating: 'Tree, be strong! Tree, be strong!' "

And he chanted this song:

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It is folly,
It is folly to be a traveller,
And go on a journey
With girl's blood on someone.
While we were roasting wild roots
A great darkness fell upon us;
It was not a shadow,
It was a terrible darkness.

And as he sang there came a large bird and circled above them, saying: "Hold tight to me!" The children held tightly; he rose with them and carried them to the town. It was midnight when they arrived. The bird alighted before the door of Masemanyamatoug's mother.

In the morning, when the old woman came out of her hut, she took some ashes and sprinkled them on the bird, saying: "This bird knows where our children are."

At midday the bird sent word to the chief, saying: "Command your people to lay down mats along all the paths!"

The chief ordered this to be done. Then the bird led back all the children, and the people were very glad.

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CHAPTER FIVE

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FETICHISM

JINNS IN HUMAN FORM

19. THE GRIOTS' ANCESTOR (*Peuhl*)

Two brothers went on a journey. One day while they were crossing a desert, where there was no water, the younger of the two was seized with great thirst. And he was also very hungry.

He said to his elder brother: "I am so hungry and thirsty that I cannot go another step. You must go on your way and leave me here to die."

The elder went away without answering him. He concealed himself behind a date-palm. There he drew his knife and cut a piece of flesh from his thigh. Then he struck a flint, lighted a fire and roasted the flesh, which he brought to his brother. The latter devoured ravenously the food which his elder brother brought him, without even dreaming of asking him where he had procured it.

When he had finished his meal he noticed some blood stains on his brother's leg, and asked him about them. The elder put off any explanation, saying he would tell him about it at the first village they reached.

As soon as they arrived at this village the younger one said to his brother: "And now tell me, as you promised, what caused those blood stains that I saw on your leg?"

"That blood," replied the elder brother, "flowed from my thigh, where I cut the piece of flesh that I gave you to eat."

"You have nourished me with your own flesh!" exclaimed the younger brother. "And had I not seen the blood that

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stained your leg I should never have suspected your devotion to me. Hereafter I shall call myself 'Dieli'. I shall be subject to you, and my descendants shall obey yours."

The younger brother was the father of the griots, who still bear the name 'Dieli', adopted by their ancestor.

20. KASKAPALEZA (*Chwabo*)

This is what a man and a woman did, long ago. The man sneezed "Atchoo!" The woman said "Bless you!" The woman said: "I need a skirt, necklaces and kerchiefs." The man said: "I need water from a well where the toads don't croak."

The woman went to find this water. She went and she went. At last she came upon a well. But just as she was going to dip her pail in she heard: "Rwerwe! Rwerwe!" She saw another well; she went to draw water there, and at once: "Rwerwe! Rwerwe!" At last she found a real well where there were no toads croaking. She began to draw some water.

There was a nandindi bird there. He saw that she wanted to draw water. He hid himself on an anthill. When he saw the animal that the well belonged to, the nandindi began to sing:

Ndindi on the anthill,
Hidden on the anthill,
Ndindi on the ant-hill,
Hidden on the ant-hill!

The animal ran to the spot, saw the woman drawing water and seized her. He married her and had by her a child to which he gave the name of Kaskapaleza.

This child said: "Mama, put me to roast." His mother put him in the roasting-pot. He said: "When you hear me go

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'Pom!' take me out." She took him out. Immediately the child began to walk and run.

When he cried he went "Nye!" They said: "What does the child mean by that cry?" They replied: "He wants an ax." Again he went "Nye!" They said: "What does the child want?" They replied: "He wants an adze." Again he went "Nye!" They said: "What does the child want?" They replied: "He wants a hoe." Again he went "Nye!" They said: "What does the child want?" They replied: "He wants a knife." His father then gave him ax, adze, hoe and knife.

His father went to work in the fields. Kaskapaleza stayed at home and made a cage. He put in it rice, beans, water, peas, the little red beans called nyemba, the little green beans called soloko. When he had done, he got into it with his mother and flew on the air straight to the home of his mother's first husband. The animal followed them from afar. He ran, ran, ran, and at last reached this man's house. The cage then appeared. They appeared too, and reached home.

The woman went first, and said: "Husband, my son and I want to die." The husband died at once.

Kaskapaleza's mother was a witch. She said: "Kaskapaleza, make a trap to catch rats. They will be good with our rice." Kaskapaleza made the trap. His mother then called her tiger and said to him: "Go and spring the trap, and when Kaskapaleza comes out to see, jump on him and kill him." The tiger sprung the trap. The mother said: "Kaskapaleza, listen! The trap has fallen." He answered: "The man-child's trap does not fall twice, it falls three times."

As soon as it began to get light the woman said: "Kaskapaleza, go and get some fire." She wanted the tiger to catch him. Kaskapaleza called his friends. And when the leopard came they all began to call "Kaskapaleza!" as if the name belonged to all of them. Their real name was Tintiwene.

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The mother said: "Kaskapaleza, blow on this straw and make the fire burn." And she cut off his hair, so that this time the tiger would be able to tell him from the others. So he called his friends and said to them: "All of you cut your hair." When all the hair had been cut the tiger came. At once everyone began to cry: "Kaskapaleza! Kaskapaleza!" And they all ran away.

When the tiger came back he said: "I was afraid to kill my mistress's son."

She said: "Leave him alone; today I will shave his head and make him sleep behind me." When she had shaved his head Kaskapaleza slept. Then she put him behind her. In the night when Kaskapaleza woke he shaved his mother's head and rubbed some paint on her skull. When the tiger came he seized the mother. She cried out "Uwi!" Kaskapaleza said: "My mother is dead." He buried her, saying: "It was she who wanted to kill me."

Kaskapaleza joined his companions, killed the tiger and put his house in order. He married, and lived with his wife.

21. MARANDENBONI (*Soninki*)

There was a witch who had seven beautiful daughters; it was said that whoever passed a night with one of them would be eaten by the witch, for it is the habit of witches to live on human flesh.

In the country where this witch lived there were eight brothers, of whom the youngest, who was only a few months old, was named Marandenboni (the child of evil).

One day Marandenboni advised his brothers to go and sleep with the witch's daughters. They said: "But don't you know that not one of their lovers has ever been seen again?"

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"Do what I tell you," said Maran, "and don't be afraid."

The eight brothers went to the witch's house; she made them very welcome and gave them a fine meal, after which she said: "Go and sleep, each of you in one of those seven huts; you will find pleasant companions for the night."

They went.

Maran, who had not been offered anything, said: "How about me, grandmother? Shall I sleep with you?"

"Yes," said the old woman.

When the young men had gone into the huts, as they were told, the old woman and Maran went into another hut and lay down side by side.

Towards the middle of the night the old woman coughed a little, to find out if Maran were asleep; the boy said nothing and did not move. The old woman got up, and Maran said: "Hi, Mama, where are you going?"

"What, are you awake, little one?"

"Oh, I never sleep until my mother has poured a basket of water over my head."

She took a basket and went to fill it at the well, but in bringing it back to the house the water all ran out. The old woman started out again, and in the end she spent all night trying to carry water in the basket.

The next day nothing happened. When night came the young men went to sleep with the girls again, and Maran with the old woman.

Overcome with sleepiness, because she had been awake all the night before, the old woman slept soundly. A little before midnight Maran got up very quietly and went from hut to hut saying to each of his brothers: "Put the witch's daughter on the outside, in your place, and cover her with your blanket." This done, Maran went back and lay down. At midnight the old woman woke up; she coughed, moved about, then rose, but

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Maran did not stir. She went from hut to hut, cutting the throat of each one that lay on the outside of the bed, then she came back and began to make a sauce with the blood of her victims. When she was about to begin eating Maran cried: "I want some too, mother!"

"What, Maran, you want to eat human blood?"

"Why, yes," said Maran, not seeming at all shocked. "It is so good!"

The meal over, they lay down again. The old woman slept, and Maran took this moment to go and say to his brothers: "Run away quickly, for when the old woman learns what she has done she will kill you." Then Maran went back again to his place.

In the morning the old woman said to him: "Go and see if your brothers are awake." Maran came back and said: "No, they are still sleeping."

A little later the old woman said to him: "What are your brothers doing now?"

He replied: "Oh, they went away a long time ago, but your daughters are sleeping for ever!" And he ran away.

The old woman, suspecting some evil, went to her daughters' huts and saw the trick that had been played on her. She swore to revenge herself on this wily Maran.

Like all witches she was able to change herself into any shape she chose. She went to Maran's village. This village had only one baobab, so the people who lived there had to go a long way to get leaves for sauce. The old woman transformed herself into a fine baobab, which all the village urchins at once began to climb.

But Maran, who was playing with them, said: "What? Does a great tall baobab like that grow out of the earth in one night, like a mushroom?"

"Surely," said the baobab, "and if you want to gather my

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leaves you are very welcome!" And one of the branches bent down so as to help Maran up.

"Oh! Oh!" said the child. "A baobab that talks and bends its branches about! That isn't at all as it should be. Climb up and gather the leaves if you like; I, for my part, shall stay here."

The baobab shook with rage, and seeing that Maran kept away, it disappeared, taking with it all the rash children who were gathering leaves.

The witch thought that the village people would send Maran to fetch the children, and she gloated beforehand over her vengeance. But Maran never came.

One day, behind Maran's village, the boys saw a donkey running loose, and having nothing better to do they caught it, and all tried to get on its back at once. When Maran caught up with them there was no more room on the donkey's back, but the donkey very kindly began to lengthen out his backbone.

"Oho!" said Maran. "This donkey must belong to the same family as the baobab!" And he ran away.

The donkey disappeared with the children on its back, and the unhappy mothers said to Maran: "You, who are so clever about not falling into the witch's snares, use your wisdom now to get our children back for us!"

Maran promised. He set out, taking with him some dried meat and niebes, carried in a goat-skin.

The witch had a little daughter the same age as Maran.

She had also a cow that was due to calve, and as she always went in fear of Maran she said, at the moment when her cow was about to calve: "If my cow has a little red calf, it will mean that Maran is in the calf's belly; if she has a little white calf, then it won't be Maran."

The little calf was white, so after that the old woman had

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no suspicion; but Maran, who was more cunning than she, was really in the little calf's belly all the same.

Like all young calves, this one also jumped and ran about very fast. One day, while passing near the little boys, it said to them: "When the old woman lets me free among you, you must catch hold of me by the ears or the tail or wherever you can, and I will take you back to your homes."

This he did, and the old woman was in despair. However, whether because she was quicker than he, or because Maran really meant her to, she somehow got hold of him.

She put her prisoner in a goat-skin, which she carefully tied up and put in another goat-skin, which she closed the same way. This she put once more in a third goat-skin and tied it very strongly.

The witch posted her little daughter near the prisoner to watch him, while she herself dug, in the yard of her house, a pit into which she threw wood and dried grass, and set it on fire.

Meanwhile the little girl could hear Maran nibbling something, so she asked: "Have you got some food there, Maran?"

"Oh, I have something much better than food; I have some real goodies!"

"Oh, Maran, do give me some!"

"How can I give you any, tied up as I am? Undo me a little, and then we'll see."

The foolish little girl opened the goat-skins; Maran jumped out, undressed her and put her in his place, together with his own things, tied up the goat-skins and went away, wearing the little girl's waist-cloth.

When the old woman picked up the goat-skin a tiny voice said to her: "Take care, mother! Maran has put me in his place, and it is your little daughter you are going to kill!"

"Yes, yes!" said the old woman. "I have heard that story

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before, Maran; I know you! You can imitate my daughter's voice all right, but that won't change your fate." And without more ado she threw the bundle on the flames. A little while after the child's body burst with a loud noise, and Maran sprang up before the old woman, crying: "How now, old witch! You have killed your last daughter!" And he ran away.

The old woman sat down, in despair, to think of the best means to avenge herself upon Maran. They say that she is thinking yet.

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CHAPTER SIX

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FETICHISM

VEGETABLE AND MINERAL JINNS

22. KOUMONGO (*Basuto*)

THERE was once a young boy named Hlabakouane; his sister was called Thakane. While the father and mother were in the fields Thakane stayed alone in the hut; it was Hlabakouane's task to herd the cattle. One day he said to his sister: "Thakane, give me Koumongo." Now Koumongo was the name of a tree of which their father and mother ate; when one made a cut with an axe, milk came out. The children were always forbidden to touch this tree.

Thakane said to her brother: "Don't you know we are forbidden to eat of this tree? Our father and mother alone may eat of it."

"If that is so, I will not drive the cattle to pasture today: they shall stay all day long in the kraal."

Thakane did not answer, and her brother continued to sit there on the lapa. After a moment she said to him: "When are you going to take the cattle out to graze?"

He answered: "They shall not graze all day long."

Then Thakane took a little clay jug and an ax, and struck Koumongo. A little milk came out; she wanted to give it to her brother but he refused, saying that there was not enough to satisfy his hunger. Thakane struck again with the ax; this time a quantity of milk came out, it was like a stream flowing in the hut. She called aloud to Hlabakouane: "Come quick and help me; our parents' tree is all melting, the hut is

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already full!" They tried in vain to stop the milk, which flowed faster than ever, running out from the hut in a stream and pouring in the direction of their parents' fields.

Rahlabakouane saw it from a long way off, and said to his wife: "Mahlabakouane, Koumongo is flowing towards us; the children must have been up to some mischief." They threw down their hoes and ran to meet Koumongo; the husband gathered up the milk in his hands and began to drink and his wife did the same. Then Koumongo turned back on itself, flowing back in its tracks till it was once more inside the hut.

When they reached the hut the parents asked their daughter: "Thakane, why did you do this? Why did this tree of which we alone have the right to eat flow down towards our fields?" She answered: "It is not my fault; it is the fault of Hlabakouane; he refused to fetch the cattle out from the kraal and take them to graze, saying that he must have some of Koumongo's milk, so I gave him some."

Then the father ordered the sheep to be driven back; he chose two, which he killed and cooked. His wife meantime ground some sorgho and made flour. The husband took the two sheep skins and rubbed them with grease and red ochre, after which he called a blacksmith to forge some iron rings. The smith fastened these rings to Thakane's arms, her legs and her neck. Then the father took the skins which he had prepared and clothed her in them; he put on her also a garment of skin cut in fringes.

When all was ready he called the people and said to them: "I am going to rid myself of Thakane."

"How can you speak like that, and do such a thing to your only daughter?"

"Because she has eaten of the tree of which she had no right to eat."

Then he set out to take her to the cannibals, that they might

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devour her. When they passed by a cultivated field a rabbit came out and asked:

"Where are you taking this lovely, lovely child?"

He answered: "Ask her yourself; she is old enough to answer."

So Thakane began to sing:

To Hlabakouane I gave of Koumongo,
To the shepherd of our flocks, Koumongo,
That our flocks might not stay all day in the kraal, Koumongo,
That they might not rot there in the kraal, Koumongo.
It was thus that I gave of my father's Koumongo.

Then the rabbit cried: "It is you who should be eaten by the cannibals, Rahlabakouane, and not this child!"

A little further on they met some elands, who asked of Rahlabakouane: "Where are you taking this lovely, lovely child?" He answered them: "Ask her yourself; she is old enough to answer you." Then the young girl sang:

To Hlabakouane I gave of Koumongo,
To the shepherd of our flocks, Koumongo,
That our flocks might not stay all day in the kraal, Koumongo,
That they should not rot there in the kraal, Koumongo.
It was thus I gave of my father's Koumongo.

Then the elands cried: "It is you who deserve to perish, Rahlabakouane, and not she!"

The next day Rahlabakouane and his daughter met some gazelles; they asked him: "Where are you taking this lovely, lovely child?" He replied: "Ask her yourself; she is old enough to answer you." Then the girl began to sing:

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To Hlabakouane I gave of Koumongo,
To the shepherd of our flocks, Koumongo,
That our flocks might not stay all day in the kraal, Koumongo,
That they should not rot there in the kraal, Koumongo.
It was thus I gave of my father's Koumongo.

The gazelles cried: "May the cannibals devour you, Rahlabakouane, and not her!"

At last they reached the cannibal village; the khotla of Masilo, the chief, was full of people. It was Masilo's father only who was a cannibal; for himself, he never ate of human flesh. Rahlabakouane and his daughter were led into the khotla; they brought Thakane a tanned ox-hide to sit on, but her father had to sit on the ground. Masilo asked Rahlabakouane: "Where are you taking this lovely, lovely child?" Rahlabakouane answered him: "You can ask her yourself; she is old enough to answer you." Then his daughter began to sing:

To Hlabakouane I gave of Koumongo,
To the shepherd of our flocks, Koumongo,
That our flocks might not stay all day in the kraal, Koumongo,
That they should not rot there in the kraal, Koumongo.
It was thus I gave of my father's Koumongo.

So, before everyone, did she confess her sin.

Then Masilo, the son of the cannibal chief, called one of his servants and said to him: "Take this man and this young girl to my mother; tell her to keep the young girl in her lapa but send the man to greet my father." Masilo's mother told the servant to lead Rahlabakouane to her husband; the servant went, and said to the cannibal chief: "Masilo told me to bring you this man, that he might salute you." The cannibal chief seized Rahlabakouane, and having put an old clay pot on the

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fire, threw him in alive; when Rahlabakouane was cooked to a turn the cannibal gorged himself on his flesh. When all was finished Masilo's servant departed and returned to his master.

As for the young girl, Masilo took her to wife; until that time he had never wanted to marry, and had refused all the young girls that were offered to him. Thakane was the only young girl who had ever pleased him.

After some time Thakane was with child, and gave birth to a little daughter. Her mother-in-law cried: "Alas, my daughter, it was in vain you suffered the pangs of childbirth!" For it was the custom in this village, whenever a girl child was born, to take it to the cannibal, who devoured it. They went to Masilo and said: "Your wife has given birth to a little girl." He replied: "Very well; take it to my father and he will look after it." But Thakane cried: "No, no! In my country we do not eat children; when they die they are buried. I do not want my child taken from me!" Her mother-in-law replied: "Here, it is wrong to bear girls; one must only give birth to boys." Masilo went up to his wife and said: "Come, Thakane, let my father take care of your child." But his wife refused. She said: "I can bury it myself. I don't want your cannibal father, who has already eaten my father, to eat my child as well!"

So she took the child in her arms and went down to the river; she came to a place where the stream formed a deep pool all surrounded by tall reeds. Here she sat down on the ground and wept for a long time, unable to bring herself to bury her child. All at once an old woman came out from the water and appeared in the midst of the reeds; this old woman asked her: "My child, why are you weeping?" Thakane answered: "I weep over my child, whom I must drown in the river." Then the old woman said: "That is true; in your village no girls may be born; one must only bring boys into the world. Give me

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your child; I will take care of it. Only let me know on what day you will return here to the pool, to see her."

Thakane entrusted her child to the old woman and returned home. On the appointed day she came again to the pool to see her. When she drew near the water's edge she began to sing:

Bring me Dilahloane, that I may see her,
Dilahloane, rejected of her father Masilo.

Then the old woman appeared with the child, which had already grown a great deal. The mother was filled with joy, and remained a long time seated by the water's edge with her child. Towards evening the old woman took the child again and disappeared with her in the depths of the water. Thakane came thus to visit her child at certain fixed times; each time she came the old woman brought Dilahloane to her. The child grew so fast that at the end of one year she was already a young girl; deep under the water the old woman made her go through the rites of womanhood.

When her mother came to visit her, she saw that she was now marriageable. On that day a man from Masilo's village had come to cut wood by the banks of the stream. He saw the young girl, and was astonished at her resemblance to Masilo. He returned to the village, took Masilo aside and said to him: "I have just seen your wife down by the river, together with your daughter, the one she said she was going to bury." Masilo asked: "Then isn't she dead, at the bottom of the water?" The man replied: "No, and moreover she is already a young girl and has undergone the rites of womanhood." Masilo said: "What should be done?" The man answered: "The next time your wife tells you she is going to the stream to bathe, go secretly before her and hide yourself in the bushes; when your wife arrives she will not know you are there."

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After a few days Thakane said to Masilo: "Today I want to go and bathe in the stream." Her husband replied: "Very well, you may go." Then he ran to the stream and hid himself in the bushes. Thakane arrived a moment later, and standing on the bank began to sing:

Bring me Dilahloane, that I may see her,
Dilahloane, rejected of her father Masilo.

Then the old woman came out from the water with Dilahloane; when Masilo looked upon her he saw that she was indeed his child, the one that his wife had said she wanted to bury. He began to weep, on seeing that his child was already so tall. The old woman said to Thakane: "I am afraid, as though someone were spying on us." She took Dilahloane and returned with her beneath the water. Thakane went back to the village; Masilo, also, returned by another path. When he reached home he sat down in his mother's lapa and stayed there a long time, weeping. Mamasilo asked him: "Why are you weeping, my child?" He said: "I have a headache; a very bad headache." In the evening he said to his wife: "I have just seen my child, on the very spot where you said you were going to bury her; you threw her into the pool, and now she is already a young girl grown." His wife replied: "I don't know what you are talking about; my child is buried in the sand." For a long while he pleaded with his wife to confide in him and give him back his child. She said: "If I give her to you, you will take her to your father, who will devour her." But he answered: "I promise you that I will do nothing of the kind, now that she is already grown."

The next day Thakane went to the old woman and said to her: "Masilo saw us yesterday. He sends me today to beg you to give him back his child." The old woman replied: "Then let him give me a thousand head of cattle."

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Thakane returned to her husband and said to him: "The old woman asks a thousand head of cattle." Masilo replied: "If she asks only a thousand it is very little; she could demand two thousand and I would give them to her, since but for her my child would be dead."

The next day he sent messengers through all the villages, ordering the people to bring him all the cattle they possessed. When all the cattle were gathered together he chose a thousand oxen and cows and had them driven to the pool in the river. When the cattle were on the bank Thakane began to sing:

> Bring me Dilahloane, that I may see her,
> Dilahloane, rejected of her father Masilo.

Then the old woman came out from the water with Dilalloane; at the moment when they appeared the sun was darkened and ceased to shine, but as soon as they stood on the bank it shone out once more. Masilo saw his child, all the people saw the child of their chief, whom her grandfather had wished to devour and whom Thakane had saved from death. Then they drove the old woman's cattle into the water, but it was really only water on top; underneath there was a vast country where dwelt a numerous tribe, governed by the old woman who had saved Dilahloane.

When they came back to the village Masilo's mother said to her son: "Now you must take Thakane back to her own home, that she may visit her mother and her brother." Messengers were sent out among all the tribe to collect the cattle with which Masilo was to marry Thakane.

Masilo set out with all the cattle and a crowd of young men. When they came to a certain narrow gorge, through which Thakane had long ago passed with her father, they saw a large rock all but blocking the way. Thakane asked her husband: "What is this great rock that bars our path?" Masilo said:

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"Did you not see it before when you passed this way with your father?" She replied: "No, there was no rock here; the passage was open." As they spoke they walked forward with the cattle they were driving. Thakane went ahead, for she alone knew the road that led to her parents' home. When they were in the gorge, a few paces from the rock, the rock began to sing:

Come on, Thakane my child, I will eat you up,
You who go first, and after I will eat up all who follow you!

This rock was none other than Rahlabakouane; when he died his heart had turned into a rock. Thakane replied: "And the oxen too; you can eat them if you like!" Then she said to her husband: "It is my father, lying in wait for us on the road."

Then they took some of the oxen and drove them towards the rock, which opened its gullet wide and swallowed them in a single mouthful. Then Rahlabakouane began to sing again:

Come on, Thakane my child, I will eat you up,
You who go first, and after I will eat up all who follow you!

Thakane said to him: "Now you can eat up our people, if you like."

Her father ate several of their companions, and stopped Thakane and her husband, who tried to continue on their way, by singing as before:

Come on, Thakane my child, I will eat you up,
You who go first, and after I will eat up all who follow you!

Then Thakane gave up to him all the rest of their people, whom he devoured to the last man. There were left only herself and Masilo, with their two children, Dilahloane and her little brother. As soon as they tried to go on their way again the rock stopped them once more, singing:

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Come on Thakane my child, I will eat you up,
You who go first, and after I will eat up all who follow you!

Then Thakane let herself be seized and eaten by her father, together with the husband and their two children; the rock swallowed them alive in a single mouthful and there they were in its belly.

Rahlabakouane's inside was like a huge cave. A young man was busy chopping Rahlabakouane's belly with a knife to make an opening; at last he cut a big hole. Thus Rahlabakouane died. The rock fell to earth with a loud noise and out came a crowd of people; none were left inside save those who had been eaten a long while ago and whose bodies were already rotting. As for those who had just been eaten, they all came out together with the cattle, walking just as well as before.

Masilo and his wife continued on their way and reached the village of Rahlabakouane; it was like a miracle to Thakane's mother and brother, for they had believed her long since dead. They wept and rejoiced at the same time; and afterwards they killed a great many head of cattle to do honour to Thakane and her husband.

23. THE TALKING GOURD (*Chambala*)

There was once a large village, where the little children went to play in the fields. One day they saw a gourd and said: "The gourd is growing big."

All at once the gourd spoke, saying: "Gather me, and I will gather you."

The children ran home and said: "Mother, down there in the field is a gourd that talks."

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The mother said to them: "Children, you are telling lies!"

The young girls who had not been with the children said: "Take us to the place where this gourd is."

When they arrived there they said: "The gourd is growing big."

The gourd answered nothing, but kept still and made no sound. The girls went back to the huts, saying: "Why do you deceive us?"

The children laughed, and replied: "Let's go back again and see for ourselves."

They went, and when they said: "The gourd is growing big," it answered them: "Gather me and I will gather you."

So they went back to the house again and told their mother, "Mother, the gourd spoke again!"

The young girls returned once more, but the gourd never said a word.

The gourd grew, it became as big as a house and ate up all the people. There was only one old woman left. All the other people in the village had been swallowed by the gourd. The gourd swallowed all the other people in the village; then it went into the sea. The old woman who was left alone gave birth to a son who, when he grew up, asked his mother: "Mother, where is my father?" She said: "Your father was eaten by a gourd, which afterwards went into the sea."

He said: "Let's go and look for my father."

He set out, and when he came to a lake he cried: "Gourd, come out! Gourd, come out! Gourd, come out!"

But he saw nothing. So he went on to another lake and cried: "Gourd, come out!"

Then he saw the gourd's ear coming out; he was very much afraid and climbed a tree. From there he cried: "Gourd, come out! Gourd, come out!"

At last the gourd came out and chased him. But he

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climbed another tree; he went to his mother and said: "Give me the quiver, so I can kill it."

Then he took some arrows from the quiver, shot, and wounded the gourd. He shot six arrows. The gourd bellowed so loudly that one could hear it as far as Vouga. At last it was dead. The young man said to his mother: "Bring me my knife."

With this he slashed the gourd; the people all came out, crying: "Who has saved us?"

"It is I!"

"Then you shall be our chief, and we will pay you homage!"

He became their chief, and received a chief's honours and estate.

24. THE HYENA AND HIS WIFE (*Kimadjami*)

Three children who were out gathering firewood went and ate some wild roots. They found a stone there, and said:

"This stone is as fine as the one our father grinds his tobacco on."

They cut a root into little bits and laid the pieces on the stone. But one of the two who arrived last did not want to do this. Afterwards they went into the forest and gathered wood. Two of the children came back laden with wood and passed by the stone, but when the third came, the one who had not wanted to give him the roots, the stone became so big that she could not pass by.

Then a hyena came and said: "If you promise to become my wife I will help you; just hold very tight to my tail, but hold fast!"

The child took hold of the hyena's tail, and he took her past the stone. Presently they came to a river; the hyena said: "Hold tight to my tail, but take care it doesn't break."

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Then he jumped over the river, but the tail broke.

"The tail of a brave courageous man," said the hyena, "does not break."

He gathered some medicine, and the tail was healed. They came to the jungle. There were a great many stones there. The hyena opened his house. The young woman asked: "Where are we now?"

"In the home of a brave courageous man," said the hyena.

Then he went out, took a goat and gave it to the young woman. He went to find a dead body, and put it in front of the oxen. The young woman ate the goat and the hyena the dead body.

One day, when the young woman was grown up, the hyena took her out on some bare ground and pricked her with a needle, to see if she was getting fat. When he drew the needle out a little grease came with it. Then the hyena took the woman back to the house. He brought her a goat, and went to find a dead body for himself. Whereupon he said to the woman: "Go and fetch an ax over there by the goats, and split some wood."

The young woman went, but found nothing. She said: "I don't see any ax."

The hyena replied: "The ax of a brave courageous man is invisible!"

The hyena went out and pretended to look about on the ground. He went to the edge of the stream and split some wood with his teeth. He saw a boy coming and called to the young woman:

"Here comes your young brother Machegu, dancing, with bells on his feet." And the hyena added: "Hair, turn to skin." He spat on it; the hair was changed and the hyena became a man. He said to Machegu: "Bring some wood."

The boy gathered some wood and brought it to the house. The hyena said: "The next time you come, dance again."

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The next day the boy came back, but without dancing; he had muffled the bells so they would not ring. All at once he saw the hyena's hair and cried out: "There's a hyena there! There's a hyena there!"

"Hold your tongue!" said the hyena. "Hold your tongue! Will you hold your tongue!" But the boy cried: "There's a hyena there! There's a hyena there!"

So the hyena sprang on him, tore off his clothing and bells, hung the clothes on a pole and ate the boy up.

When the hyena returned to the house he called the young woman: "Maswe!" She asked: "Where has Machegu gone?"

"He is gathering wood," replied the hyena. And he added after a moment: "I don't see him yet."

The child of a neighbouring hyena came and said: "Wife of the king, give me a little fire."

The young woman did not give him any. The child said again: "Young woman, young woman, give me some meat!"

She replied: "I have none."

"Young woman, young woman, give me a little meat!"

She gave him some. Then the child said: "I am not full yet. Give me some meat, wife of the king, and after I will tell you something."

She gave him some, and the child said to her: "Today, you are going to be eaten up."

He made her a present of some medicine which purged her completely. She then smeared herself with filth, then took some nightshade berries and put one with the dogs, one with the cattle, and another on the bare ground. She spat on these, saying: "When you are called, answer."

The other hyenas set out, and one of them said: "Masangya, what does your wife look like?"

He answered: "The wife of a brave courageous man does not look like that."

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The wife fled.

The hyenas were full of joy; they danced about, and the little hyenas gathered wood in the jungle and sang: "Wood, wood, I am going to roast some meat! Wood!"

Masangya entered the house and called: "Young woman! Young woman! Masawe, where are you?"

"I am here among the goats!"

The hyena searched, could not find her, and shouted again: "Young woman! Young woman! Masawe, where are you?"

"I am here among the cattle!"

The hyena looked among the cattle, saw nothing, and called: "Young woman! Young woman! Masawe, where are you?"

"I am here on the bare ground!"

The other hyenas called him. "Masangya, what are you doing there?"

He answered: "It is not an easy thing to move!"

The other hyenas came. "Bring out your wife, so we can cut her throat and eat her; bring her out! Bring her out!"

Masangya looked and saw nothing; he was afraid of the other hyenas; he hid in the ashes and covered himself with earth.

The other hyenas came, entered the house, looked about and said: "Masangya is invisible."

So they went away.

But the little hyenas, who had stayed in the house, saw a little tail sticking out of the fireplace. They called the big hyenas. The big hyenas came, rummaged about everywhere, and ate the tail. They left a little meat, telling the young hyenas: "Keep a bit of the skin."

But the little hyena who was on guard tore a tiny scrap off. The others said: "What, are you tearing some off? Then it shall all be eaten up!" And the hyenas ate it up.

The wife continued to flee; she came to a wide river. She

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wanted to throw herself in, but the hyenas shouted: "Wait, wife of the king!"

The woman spat on the river, and smote it with a staff. The waters parted, above and below. The hyenas wanted to pass over, in their turn, but when they reached the middle the waters closed again in a great flood and swallowed them up.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

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FETICHISM

CHARMS

25. TAKISE (*Haussa*)

ONE of the cows belonging to a Peuhl herder wandered off when just about to calve, and was brought down in an old lougan. After she returned to her master's herd the bulls, seeing that she had dropped her calf, at once began to search for it, but though they hunted all through the brush they could find nothing, and they returned sadly to the pasture, saying that the calf must have been devoured by wild beasts.

An old woman who went to the abandoned lougan to get sorrel leaves to make sauce for her couscous, saw the calf crouched under a bush. She took it home with her, and fed it on bran, salted millet and grass.

The calf grew up into a fine big bull.

One day a butcher came by and asked the old woman to sell him her bull, but she refused. "Takise," she said (for that was the name she had given to her adopted pet), "Takise is not for sale." The butcher, annoyed at her refusal, went to the king and said to him: "Old Zeynebou has a big bull which only you should eat, he is so fine."

The sartyi sent the butcher, together with six other men, commanded by one of his messengers, to fetch the old woman's bull. When the little troupe arrived at Zeynebou's house the chief's messenger said to her: "The sartyi has sent us to fetch your bull, which will be killed tomorrow." She replied: "It is not for me to oppose the king's wishes. I only ask of you one

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favour, which is, not to take Takise away until tomorrow morning."

The next morning at daybreak the dansama and the seven butchers came to the old woman's house and approached the picket to which Takise was tethered. The bull came towards them with his horns lowered, snorting loudly. The eight men, very uneasy at this, drew back, and the dansama, calling the old woman, said to her: "Old woman, tell your bull to let us put the cord around his neck."

The old woman went up to the bull. "Takise, my Takise," she said, "let them put the rope round your neck." The bull obeyed, and they put a halter on him and tied a rope to one of his hind legs, to lead him to the sartyi. When they were in the king's presence the butchers threw the bull on his side and tied his four legs; then one of them drew near with a knife to cut his throat. But the knife could not cut so much as a hair, for Takise had the power to prevent iron from grazing his skin.

The head butcher begged the sartyi to send for the old woman. He declared that without her it would be impossible to kill Takise, who must have some charm against iron. The sartyi sent for the old woman and said to her: "Unless they are able to kill your bull without any more delay I will have your head cut off."

The old woman went up to Takise, who still lay bound and upon his side, and said to him: "Takise, my Takise, let yourself be killed. Everything now is for the chief!"

The head butcher then killed Takise without any trouble. The butchers flayed the body, cut it up and took the meat to the sartyi, who told them to give the old woman back the fat and the guts for her share.

The old woman took everything in an old basket and carried it home. There she put the guts and fat in a big jar, for she

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had not the heart to eat the animal which she had brought up, and of which she had been so fond.

The old woman had neither child nor slave, so she had to do the housework herself. But it so happened that, ever since she put Takise's remains into the jar, she found her hut swept every morning and her water-jars filled to the brim. And this happened every time that she went away for a moment. For the guts and fat changed themselves every morning into two young girls, who did her work for her.

One morning the good woman said to herself: "Today I will find out who sweeps my floor and fills my water-jars." She went out of the hut and closed the entrance with a mat, then, hiding behind the mat, she sat down and spied through the holes to see what went on inside.

She had scarcely sat down when she heard a noise in the hut. She listened without stirring. It was the strokes of a broom on the floor that made this noise. All at once she threw down the mat and saw two young girls who ran to hide themselves, as quickly as they could, in the big jar. "Don't go away," she cried out to them. "I have no child, as you know. We will all three live here together."

The young girls stopped in their flight, and drew near the old woman. She gave to the prettiest of the two the name Takise; the other she called Aisa.

For a long time they lived with the old woman without anyone knowing that they were there, for they never went outside. One day a gambari came to the hut and asked for a drink of water. It was Takise who brought the water, and the stranger was so overcome by her beauty that he forgot to drink.

When he visited the king the gambari told him how, in the house of an old woman in the village, he had seen a young girl of unrivaled beauty. "This girl," he added, "should be married only to a sartyi."

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The sartyi at once ordered his griot to go, together with the dioula, to fetch this young girl. She came, followed by the old woman. "Your daughter is wonderfully beautiful," said the sartyi to the old woman. "I shall take her for my wife." "Sartyi," the old woman replied, "I will gladly give her to you in marriage, but on condition that she never goes out in the sun, or goes near a fire, for she would melt at once, like a bit of fat."

The sartyi promised the old woman that Takise should never go out while the sun shone, and never do any cooking. Thus there would be no fear of her ever being exposed to heat, which was fatal to her.

So Takise married the king, who put her in the place of his favourite wife. The latter, deposed from her position, became no better than an ordinary wife, such as may never, without express permission, enter the presence of her husband.

After seven months the sartyi went on a journey. The day he set forth the women gathered together and said to Takise:

"You are the chief's favourite, and you never work. Unless you roast us these grains of sesame at once we will kill you and throw your body down the latrine."

Takise, frightened by this threat, drew near the fire to roast the sesame seed in a pot, and as she bent over their roasting her body began to melt like butter in the sun, turning into a greasy fluid which gave rise to a great stream.

The other wives watched this transformation unmoved. When all was over the former favourite said: "Now, we are ruined, mark my words! When the sartyi comes back he will have our heads cut off. He will never forgive us for making his favourite work at the fire until she melted. And the very first to have her head cut off will be me!"

Until their husband's return the king's women lived in fear and trembling.

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The sartyi came back from his journey several days later. Before he even drank the water offered him, he called for his favourite. "Takise! Takise!"

The former favourite then came to him and said: "Sartyi and husband, I can hide nothing from you. While you were away the little ones (she meant the other wives) made Takise work by the fire. She melted like butter, and that new stream you see there in the distance is the stream to which she gave rise in melting."

"I must have my Takise! I must have my Takise!" the sartyi cried. He ran at once to the watercourse, followed by the former favourite.

When they reached the edge of the delta the king turned into a hippopotamus and plunged after Takise. The ex-favourite, who loved her husband deeply, took the shape of a cayman and plunged into the water also, so as not to leave the sartyi.

Ever since that time, hippopotamus and cayman have always lived in the deltas.

26. NTOTOATSANA (*Basuto*)

There was once a chief's daughter named Ntotoatsana; her father had no children except her and her little brother. It was she who herded the cattle, and even drove them to the summer pasture. One day while she was herding the cattle a long way off from the village a whirlwind arose, took her up and carried her far away on the air. She was carried to a tribe of Matabele, who had only one leg, one arm, one eye and one ear. She lived with them and married the chief's son.

Her husband took the horns of animals and buried them under the earth in his hut; one day when Ntotoatsana tried to run away the horns began to call out:

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Ow-ow-ee! Here is Ntotoatsana, who was caught by a whirlwind and carried away
While she was herding her father's cattle, the cattle of Sekoae!

Then the Matabele came running, and took her back to her husband.

She lived there a long while, and bore two little twin daughters, who looked just like her. The two children grew up, developed, and became tall young girls. One day when they went to the spring to fetch water they found some men hidden behind a thicket of reeds. It was their uncle, their mother's brother, and his servants. He asked them: "Whose daughters are you?"

"The daughters of Selo-se-ma-qoma." [1]

"And your mother, what was her name?"

"Ntotoatsana."

"Whose daughter was she?"

"She told us that she was carried away by a whirlwind, while she was herding her father's cattle."

Then the man cried: "These are surely my sister's children!"

Then he and his companions cut a certain number of reeds and made a bundle which they gave to the young girls, saying: "As soon as you reach home, hide these reeds quickly under the ox-hide where your mother always sits; begin to cry and tell her to go and get you some food."

The young girls did as their uncle told them; while their mother had gone to get them some food they quickly hid the reeds under the ox-hide. When their mother came back and sat down on the hide the reeds were crushed; the young girls burst into tears. Their mother tried to console them, promising to send a young man to get some more reeds, but they continued to

[1] Literally, something wrinkled, covered with scales.

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weep, insisting that their mother should go herself and fetch them.

Ntotoatsana therefore went to the spring to fetch the reeds; there she saw her brother and recognized him. She wept with joy. Her brother asked her: "When shall we go home? Why do you stay with these Matabele, with Selo-se-ma-qoma?"

She answered: "I cannot leave here; as soon as I try to go the horns give the alarm."

He asked her: "What horns do you mean? How can they talk?"

Ntotoatsana replied: "They are magic horns which my husband buried under the earth in my hut."

Then her brother said: "This is what you must do: heat some water, pour it into the horns, and then stop them up with *moroko;* [1] then take some big stones and lay them over the horns. When everyone is asleep, escape with your two children and meet us here."

Ntotoatsana went home and told her two daughters to heat some water; in the evening she took this hot water and poured it into the horns; then she took some *moroko* and stopped up the openings. After this she took some big stones and laid them over the horns. Then, when all the village was sound asleep, she woke her two children and went with them to the spring to join her brother and his two companions. They all fled together. The horns tried to give the alarm, but they could only go "ow-ow-ow!" The village people said: "Those are dogs barking!" Meanwhile Ntotoatsana and her companions continued swiftly on their way; they ran without stopping until daylight.

When they were already a long way off, the horns gave the alarm, crying:

[1] *Moroko* is what remains of the fermented sorgho meal, after the native beer has been made. It has somewhat the consistency of sawdust.

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Ow-ow-ee! Here is Ntotoatsana, who was caught by a whirlwind
and carried away
While she was herding her father's cattle, the cattle of Sekoae!

The Matabele set out in pursuit, making great hops on their single legs. As they drew near to Ntotoatsana and her companions and were about to overtake them, they saw that they were leading a black sheep by a halter. The sheep began to sing:

Hase fouhlaele fou, ha o na tema fou.[1]

The Matabele stopped, very much surprised, while Ntotoatsana and her companions kept on their flight. Then the sheep lifted his tail and began to dance, spurning the ground with his hoofs. When he saw that Ntotoatsana and her companions were far enough away, the sheep suddenly disappeared and went to join them.

The Matabele began their chase once more, each trying to outstrip the others. The whole plain was covered with Matabele, all running. They soon came in sight of Ntotoatsana again. Then the sheep began once more to sing and dance, and the Matabele stopped in surprise to watch it. When Ntotoatsana and her companions were again well in advance the sheep disappeared suddenly and went to join them. The Matabele started in pursuit once again, saying: "By Maqoma, this time we will go straight after Ntotoatsana without stopping for this little sheep, no matter how well he sings and dances!" Just as they were about to overtake Ntotoatsana the sheep began again to sing and dance, even more marvelously than before, and the Matabele had to stop in amazement and watch him. Then he disappeared before their very eyes. This time the Matabele lost heart; they returned home much ashamed of themselves, saying: "This time our chief's wife has escaped us for good!"

[1] Which means nothing at all.

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Ntotoatsana and her brother reached home, where they were received with great joy. During her mourning Ntotoatsana's mother had let her hair grow, until it was as long as a bird's tail. Now she cut it. Then she invited all their friends and relatives and held a great feast to celebrate the return of Ntotoatsana.

27. EGG (*Basuto*)

There was once upon a time a chief whose wives bore only daughters; one day, one of them gave birth to an egg, as large as that of an ostrich. The father took the egg and locked it up. One day, a long time after, he went to a feast in the village of another chief. He saw there one of the daughters of this chief who pleased him very much; he said to the young girl's father: "I like your daughter very much; I must take her in marriage for my son." He went home to fetch the cattle with which the girl should be married, and then took her home with him. He built her a hut where she might live with his own daughters.

Years passed without this young girl ever seeing her husband; she lived always alone, with the daughters of her mother-in-law. One year, while they were digging and sowing the fields, the seed ran short; the chief sent one of his daughters home to fetch some more. As she entered the lapa she saw that the egg had left the hut and was rolling all around the lapa, saying: "Ha ha! My father has given me a wife!" The egg's sister picked it up, put it back in its hiding-place in the hut and returned to the fields with the seed.

The next day, the seed ran short again; the chief sent his daughter once more to fetch some. This time also she found the egg, which had come out of the hut and was rolling around the lapa, saying: "Ha ha! My father has given me a wife!" The sister picked it up and shut it in the hut again, before re-

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turning to the fields with the seed. The day after the seed again ran short while they were working in the fields. The father said to his daughter: "Go and fetch me some seed." But the daughter-in-law cried: "No, today it is my turn to fetch it!" She went, and when she reached the lapa she found the egg rolling about as before, saying: "Ha ha! My father has given me a wife!" She was very much surprised, and said to herself: "What! Is that round thing my husband?" She took the egg, and instead of putting it back in her father-in-law's hut, put it in her own hut. Then she returned to the fields with the seed.

She told no one of what she had done; the father and mother did not notice that the egg was no longer in their hut. In the evening she said: "Tonight I am going to sleep in my hut; no one must come in." Her mother-in-law asked: "Why is this?" She replied: "I am ill; my head aches. I am afraid my companions would make too much noise." So she lay down in her hut alone to sleep. But in the middle of the night she rose very quietly and ran away home to her parents. She reached there before daybreak and said to her father: "Father, you have cast me away." Her father replied: "No, my child; I did not cast you away, I gave you in marriage." She said: "My husband is not a man; I have an ostrich egg for my husband." And she added: "Father, you must return the cattle with which I was bought in marriage, for I will not return to my husband." Her father said: "You must return." She replied: "Never!" Then her father said to her: "I will give you a medicine, with which you shall change this egg into a man."

So her father gave her a charm, and said to her: "Take this medicine, my child, and return to your husband. When you are at home take an old clay pot, fill it with water, light the fire and let the water boil." The young woman returned home, before dawn. She did as her father had told her; then she took

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the egg and put it on a mat of rushes. She poured the boiling water over the egg, then rubbed it with grease and covered it with warm blankets. Then she stretched herself on the earth, and after a moment she heard a voice saying:

"I am growing a leg . . . I am growing another . . . I am growing an arm . . . I am growing another arm . . . here is my head coming out . . . here is my nose . . . an eye . . . another eye . . . here is an ear . . . another ear . . ." At last the voice said: "Now, I have everything!" And at the same moment she heard the shell of the egg break and the pieces rattle on the ground.

Then the young woman rose and took off the blankets; she found that the egg had become a very handsome man, perfectly shaped and with nothing at all lacking. She heated some water, put in the medicine which her father had given her, then she rubbed her husband from head to foot and smeared him with grease. After this she carefully swept up all the bits of egg-shell and put them into a small earthen pot.

When it was daylight, she left the hut, after having shut her husband inside, and sat down in front of the doorway. Her mother-in-law came and said: "How is your head?" She replied: "It still pains me very much." Her mother-in-law asked: "Don't you want to eat a little broth?" The young woman replied: "Yes, bring me some." Her mother-in-law brought some to her, saying: "Now we are all going to the fields; you stay quietly at home, daughter."

When everyone had gone to the fields the young woman rose and went swiftly to her parents' house. She said to her father: "I did all that you told me, and now the egg is a man." Her father said to her: "Ah, you see, my daughter, you see! Now I will give you some clothes for your husband." And he gave her a little cloak of ox-hide and a leather belt, a shield with its plume, an assegai and a head-dress of plaited wicker. The

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wife returned with these things and gave them to her husband, saying: "Egg, here are your garments." Egg took the belt and buckled it on, took the mantle and wrapped it about him, took the head-dress and put it on his head.

At night, when everyone had returned from the fields, the young woman left her husband in the hut and shut the door, saying: "Egg, stay here; take care not to show yourself outside." Then she came out and sat before her hut.

Her mother-in-law came and asked her: "How do you feel now, my child?" She replied: "My head still hurts me." The mother-in-law said: "Shall I bring you some more broth?" She replied: "Yes, please bring me some." She took the broth and added: "Bring me also some dung so I can light a fire." She went into the hut, lit a fire, and shared with her husband the broth which had been brought to her.

The next morning at daybreak she woke her husband. "Egg, get up quickly, leave the hut and go and seat yourself in the khotla, on your father's seat."

Egg dressed himself, put on his head-dress, took his shield ornamented with plumes and his assegai, came out from the hut and went to the khotla, where he sat down in his father's place. As yet no one in the village was awake. When the herdsmen came out from their huts to milk the cows, they said to one another: "Who is that man sitting in the chief's seat? We don't know who he can be; perhaps he is a stranger. It is a stranger who dares to sit in the chief's seat!"

Egg called one of them and said to him: "Bring me your milk to see." The boy brought him some. Egg said: "All right; take it into the lapa." The boy went to the chief and said to him: "Master, there is a stranger seated in the khotla in your seat; he told us to bring him the milk to see." The chief asked: "Where does he come from?" The boy answered: "Master, I do not know."

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Then the chief came out, and went up to the stranger, saying: "Hail!" The other replied: "Hail to you also!"

"From whence do you come?"

"I am your guest; I have come to visit you." Then Egg added: "Don't you know me, then?"

The chief replied: "I do not know you; tell me your name."

Then Egg said: "I am Egg, your son." . .

So then the chief called all his people, and showing them this man, said: "This is my son, who was born in the shape of an egg; today he is changed into a man."

The chief was overcome with joy; the whole village rejoiced. They killed cattle and made a great feast in honour of the king's son. Then the chief asked Egg's wife: "How did you change him?" She answered: "My father gave me a medicine with which I hatched him out." The chief said: "I will reward you, my child." So he gave her a number of cattle as a sign of his great gratitude. As for Egg, he became chief and reigned in his father's place.

After some time Egg took a second wife and neglected his first wife; he never came to see her, even once. He even took away her garments and deprived her of all help. At last one day the wife lost heart and wept for a long, long time; then she went to her father-in-law and said: "My father, why has Egg deserted me like this?" Her father-in-law replied: "I have done all that I could, but it is useless. Egg says that he is chief now."

When the sun went down Egg went to pass the night in the hut of the wife he loved. Then his first wife remembered the bits of egg-shell she had kept; she took them and put them in her blanket; then she went to the hut where Egg was sleeping. She squatted down by the door and said to him: "Hail, chief!" He returned her greeting and she added: "Give me a pinch of tobacco." Egg answered: "I have no more tobacco." She

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said: "I am thirsty; give me a drink of water." Egg's second wife answered: "I have no more water." But Egg scolded her, saying: "Come, give this poor woman a little water!" Then Egg's first wife spread the pieces of egg-shell near the place where her husband laid his head. After which she returned to her hut.

The other wife heard Egg saying: "Hold me, I feel one of my legs going . . . I feel the other going . . . hold me, one of my arms is going . . . now the other is going too . . . hold me, I feel my head going . . . now my back . . ." In a moment he had turned into an ostrich egg again. His wife, touching him with her hands, found that he was only an egg. Very much terrified, she left the hut and ran away.

The next day the people of the village waited a long time for their chief, Egg, to come out from his hut, but they did not see him. They asked his father: "Where is Egg?" He replied: "I do not know; perhaps he is still asleep." They had long ago finished milking, but still Egg did not appear. His mother went to the hut and called: "Egg! Egg!" There was no answer. Then she went in and took off the blankets; she found that her son had become an egg again, like he used to be. She called her husband to come and see for himself. They wept bitterly, saying: "Alas, when shall we see our child again! What can we do?"

Then the chief went to his daughter-in-law's parents, with whom she had taken refuge. He begged her for a long time to have pity on him, but she refused stubbornly, repeating: "No, I will not go; your son has treated me too badly!" Egg's father tried in vain to soften her heart; she refused to do anything at all. At last her father said to her: "Come, my child, take this medicine and return to your husband. If he treats you badly again, then you can leave him for good."

The young woman took the medicine, returned home and

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did as she had done the first time. Once more Egg hatched out from his shell and became a man. Then he said to his wife: "Today, I am sorry for what I did to you, my wife; I will never do it again." He put away his second wife and devoted himself alone to her who had transformed him. He said to her:

"When I am dead, then only may another marry you. If you die the first, then only will I take another wife."

28. THE MAGIC MIRROR (*Chwabo*)

A man and his wife had an only child. They said: "Tell us, why is it we have no other child? We will go and consult the almighty." They went, and asked: "Tell us, why is it we don't have any more children?" The almighty said: "Go and take two fish of the kind called pendé, a male and a female." He added: "Eat them." They took two, ate them, and had their child. He was given the name of Tembo.

Tembo grew. His mother said to him: "Go cut some wood." She added: "Cut the wood where you like, only do not go into that forest over there." Tembo went to cut wood in another forest, brought it, and said: "After all, if I die it is nothing: I am only a man."

He went into this forest and met a boa who had swallowed a large gazelle. But the gazelle's head had stuck in his mouth; it could go neither up nor down. The boa said: "Come here, Tembo, and cut off this head for me." Tembo said: "You will kill me." The boa said: "Come here, I am not going to kill you." Tembo drew near him, and cut off the head. The boa said: "Let us go and get your reward." He added: "Hold tight to my tail; if you leave go you will lose everything." He added: "When I go through the thorns, don't let go of me!"

Tembo caught hold of the tail, and they went, went, went.

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When they went through the thorns they pricked, pricked. They came to the boa's house.

There Tembo slept two, three days; he made friends with the boa's son. The boa said: "Tembo, when you take my mirrors out tomorrow you may choose one of them, whichever one you like." The boa's son said to him: "When you see a fly settle on one of the mirrors, take that one; it is a magic mirror."

The next day the mirrors were taken outside, and laid out in a space as big as from here to there. A fly began to buzz about here and there, without settling. Tembo ran after it, ran and ran. The fly settled, and Tembo took the mirror. The boa said: "Is that the one you want?" Tembo said: "This is the one I want." Tembo went home, to his mother's house, and took the mirror with him.

He said: "Mirror, mirror, is it true what your master said?" He added: "I want to know this very minute. I want a house roofed with tiles." The house rose up at once. He said: "Mother, I want the governor's daughter." He took his cloak, made of a sack, his old torn hat, his broken shoes, a necktie made from a banana leaf, an umbrella, made of banana leaves too, and in his hand a broken cane. And he went, walking with heavy steps, *gwfe, gwfe* . . .

He climbed the terrace. The governor came out and asked him: "What do you want?" He said: "I want to marry your daughter." The governor said: "You would have the audacity to marry my daughter?" The governor called his wife and said: "This rogue wants to marry your child." She said: "If you want to marry my daughter you must make a house in the middle of the river, and it must be a house of only one story." Tembo said: "Mirror, mirror, I want a fine grand house in the middle of the river." The house rose up at once. He said: "I want servants." He added: "I need a table, a bed, some food, a chair." The next day the governor looked and said:

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"Alas, my child, we are lost!" The governor had risen very early to see. Tembo received his wife. He went to live in his fine house. He said: "I need a rooster, some goats, cows, hens and ducks of all kinds."

He went out to walk, came to the river bank and went to pay a visit to his mother. He went away, and walked about again. A war came. The rooster began to sing: "Everything is falling in ruin!" Tembo returned in great haste and said: "Mirror, mirror, I don't want to see this war that has fallen on us!" Then all the warriors died. Tembo went out to walk again. The war came once more. The rooster began to sing: "Everything is falling in ruin!" Tembo came back in a great hurry and said: "Mirror, mirror, I don't want this war that is coming here." All the warriors died one after another.

An old woman who was left spoke to Tembo's wife, saying: "Let me see this magic mirror." The wife drew it out. The old woman looked, looked; she changed it for another. Then she said: "Take your mirror; I must go on my way." She went away with the mirror to the governor. The governor put it under an up-turned box. The war came; a great mass of warriors came by the river. The rooster began to sing: "Everything is falling!" Tembo came back in a great hurry and said: "Mirror, mirror, I don't want this war!" They came and caught Tembo. He was shut up in a stable and his fine house was destroyed.

Tembo was shut up with his cat. Tembo's wife had returned to her father. In the stable there were rats with very sharp teeth. They tried to come and bite Tembo. But the cat caught one of the biggest ones. The other rats came, and the cat bit them. One rat said: "Let me go, and I will go and fetch your mirror." He let him go, and the rat went straight to the governor and came back with a mirror. Tembo said: "This is

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not it." The rat went back and got the one that was under the box and gave it to Tembo. He said: "This is the one."

Then he said: "Mirror, mirror, I want to get out from here." He came out. He said: "Mirror, mirror, I want a house like I had before." The house arose. He said: "I want a bed, a table, I want some servants, I want some servingmen." He added: "I want my wife to come back." At once his wife came back. That is the end.

29. THE YBOUMBOUNI'S TAIL (*Gourmanti*)

Three days after he was born little Diandia said to his father, Tangari: "Give me a bow with a very strong string."

His father gave him one with a string made of plaited doe-skin. The child tried it. He bent it, and the string broke at once. His father brought him in turn a bow with a string of koba-skin, then another with a string of wild ox-hide and at last one with a string of elephant hide. This string broke like the others.

Then Diandia said to his father: "You must tear out the sinew from your leg and make a string for my bow, no other will be strong enough."

Tangari did as his son wished.

When his bow was fitted with the string he wanted, Diandia set out to hunt. At the moment of starting his father said to him: "When you want to do me homage with the tail of some animal you have killed, you must offer me nothing less than the tail of a yboumbouni."

The yboumbouni is the finest animal in the world, and has a very tall tail. It is strong enough to carry a hundred elephants. Its tail is plumed like that of a horse, and ornamented with the whitest of white cowries and gold beads. The yboum-

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bouni uses this tail to catch the animals he hunts. When nearly within reach of the beast he is chasing he turns round very quickly and the hairs of his tail entangle the legs of his prey and hold it fast.

Little Diandia marched for seven hundred years on the Eastern coast, for it is on this coast that the extraordinary things happen, and where naturally he would find the yboumbouni. At last he came to the forest where they live.

He found the mother yboumbouni alone. When he got there the young ones were out hunting.

He told the mother yboumbouni why he had come. "You shall have your wish," she promised him. "I will hide you in the dried meat jar. Don't make the slightest noise, or else my children will find you and you will be eaten up at once."

At midnight, when all the yboumbounis were asleep, their mother cut off the tail of the youngest one and gave it to Diandia. Then he came out from the jar, and the mother yboumbouni put him on his right road. He set out running.

Now every morning, on waking up, the young yboumbounis sang a song, each in turn. The biggest one, as soon as he was awake, began:

I am going to see if my ox-hunting tail is still there,
If my elephant-hunting tail is still there, all whole.
Figuilan dianyeu! Mine is all right! [1]

Each one repeated this little song, down to the very smallest one who, not finding his tail, ended his song thus:

Figuilan dianyeu! Mine is gone!

Then they all set out on Diandia's track, sniffing the ground. Just as they were about to overtake the little one, he turned round and saw them. So he sang:

[1] *Figuilan dianyeu:* onomatopoetic phrase, meaning the noise made by the tail in thrashing the air.

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O father, father! The yboumbouni is going to eat me up!
All because you did not ask of me, instead of his tail,
That of the wild ox, no! no! no!
That of the koba, no! no! no!
That of the elephant, no! no! no!

This song pleased the yboumbouni very much. "We must fetch our mother," they said, "to hear how a man sings!"

While they turned back on their tracks Diandia fled as fast as his legs could carry him.

When they reached their mother the yboumbouni told her all that they had seen. "Go and fetch this creature," their mother said to them, "and bring him here." The yboumbouni went after Diandia again; they had once more nearly overtaken him when he, being now quite close to his village, saw them coming and began to sing as before.

O father, father! The yboumbouni is going to eat me up!

The yboumbouni once more turned back to tell their mother what they had heard, but this time, when she sent them after Diandia again, the little one was already safe with his father, to whom he offered in homage the yboumbouni's tail.

With it Tangari touched the wound on the calf of his leg, which time had not yet healed over, and it was at once cured. He kept the tail as a precious talisman.

Ever since that day old men have always kept the tails of animals, which they use for brushing off flies.

30. A BASKETFUL OF CHILDREN (*Chwabo*)

A man and his wife. The wife gave birth to children, a whole basketful.

The man said: "Woman, I don't want you."

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The woman then set out, walky, walky, walky, till she met a big bird, who was waiting for her, in hiding. When the woman came there the bird said:

Weep, weep, ndeyandeya,
Weep, ndeyandeya,
Give me a child to eat,
To eat, ndeyandeya,
Weep, ndeyandeya.

She gave him a child; he ate it, went on ahead again and hid himself till she came up. He said:

Weep, weep, ndeyandeya,
Weep, ndeyandeya,
Give me a child to eat,
To eat, ndeyandeya,
Weep, ndeyandeya.

She gave him another child; he ate it, and again went ahead to hide himself on the road. He said:

Weep, weep, ndeyandeya,
Weep, ndeyandeya,
Give me a child to eat,
To eat, ndeyandeya,
Weep, ndeyandeya.

She said: "Take it yourself and eat it."

He took it and ate it. All the children went, down to the last. The bird went ahead to hide himself and wait. He said:

Woman, where are you going?
Where are you going, ndeyandeya?
Weep, ndeyandeya,
Come here that I may eat you up, ndeyandeya!

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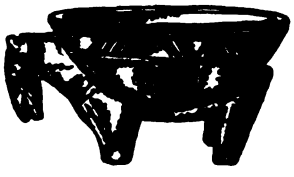
He caught hold of her and ate her. When the woman was dead the basket went on its way all alone. The bird went ahead and hid himself, to wait for it. He said:

Basket, where are you going?
Where are you going, ndeyandeya?
Weep, ndeyandeya,
Come here that I may eat you up, ndeyandeya,
Weep, ndeyandeya.

He caught hold of it and ate it up. But the basket tore his entrails. It came out, began to run, and came to the village. It said: "The woman is dead, so are all the children."

That's the end.



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CHAPTER EIGHT

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FETICHISM

ABSTRACT CONCEPTIONS

31. DEATH AND LIE (*Chwabo*)

THERE were once upon a time two men, Truth and Lie. Truth invited Lie to go with him to find something to eat. They set out, walking one behind the other, and came upon some people who were digging, and a little girl, by the roadside, who was picking up sand and rubbing it on her chest. Truth went up to the child and struck her, and immediately the father ordered that Truth be offered a drink of water. But the mother said that whoever gave water to Truth should perish with him in a common fate. "I never said," interposed Lie, "that Truth needed anything to eat or drink." So they let Lie go free.

He came to a house, where he heard that the chief of the village was dead. Lie declared that he could bring back the dead man to life, and that for that purpose all that was needed was to shut up in a box a wood-pigeon and a mason-fly. Then he told the eldest son of the dead chief that he must get ready an ass and thirty thousand cowries to give him. At sunset he ordered the tomb to be opened, and going inside he let the wood-pigeon and the mason-fly loose. At once the bird began to coo and the fly to buzz. "Listen!" said Lie. "Your father and grandfather are coming out! Can't you tell your father by his soft voice and your grandfather by his big deep voice? Listen well!" And so they let Lie go on his way, with his ass and his thirty thousand cowries.

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Journeying onward, Lie met Death, who had just died. Lie wanted to buy him, but was told that he was not for sale. Certain persons, however, said that they would make the bargain with Lie if he would let them know what he wanted with such a purchase. The sale took place, and Lie counted out thirty thousand cowries to give them; then, dragging Death behind him, he walked all round the village, beating him as he went. Then the village people wanted to buy Death back again and bury him, but Lie said that he had bought him, and that if they wanted to get him back and bury him they must pay one hundred thousand cowries. He got his hundred thousand cowries, and went to a certain rich man.

He said to this man's wife: "When I call you, you must answer me with abuse." He threw the woman down and began to beat her, then he hung round her neck an oxgut filled with blood. He cut the gut, and announced that the woman was dead. The chief came out from the house. "What have you done?" he asked Lie. "You have done a very bad thing here." But Lie replied that that was his business, and that they should let him be. And he took an ox tail and dipped it in a calabash of water and fanned the woman's head and made a draught of air behind her. And the woman rose up.

At once the chief gave Lie a number of cattle in order to possess this charm. Then he went home, took some nuts, and told his wife to make oil for the people who were working in the fields. The woman ground the nuts, made oil and prepared the food. She returned at sunset. "What?" said her husband. "I tell you to prepare food for the people who are working in the field, and you don't come till nightfall!" And he threw his wife down on the ground, gave her many blows and finally strangled her. But he quickly took the ox tail and the calabash of water and began to fan his wife. She did not however rise

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up. Then the children fell upon their father, beat him and killed him.

Lie, however, ran away, taking with him all his fortune.

32. LIE AND TRUTH (*Malinke*)

One day Lie and Truth went on a journey together.

Lie said politely to his companion: "You must do the talking everywhere we go, for if I am recognized no one will receive us."

At the first house they entered it was the master's wife who welcomed them; the master came home at nightfall and at once asked for something to eat. His wife said: "I have not prepared anything yet." Now at midday she had prepared dinner for two, and had hidden half of it away. Though her husband knew nothing of this he was very angry all the same, because he had come in very hungry from the fields. Turning to the strangers he said: "Do you think this is the way a good housewife should act?"

Lie wisely kept silence; but Truth, obliged to reply, answered with sincerity that a good housewife should have everything prepared for her husband's return. The wife of the host, very angry with these strangers who interfered in her household affairs, turned them out of doors.

At the second village they came to, Lie and Truth found some children busily dividing a sterile cow, very fat, which they had just killed.

When the travelers went to the chief's house they recognized the children, who had just brought the chief the head and other parts of the cow, saying: "Here is your share." Now everyone knows that it is always the chief who gives the shares in a distribution of this kind.

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The chief, addressing the strangers who had watched all this, asked them: "Who do you think is in command here?"

"It seems," said Truth, "that the children command!" At these words the chief fell into a terrible fury and had the impertinent strangers driven away.

Then Lie said to Truth: "Really, I can't let you look after our affairs any longer, or we shall die of hunger. From now on I must provide myself."

At the next village, which they reached shortly after, they settled themselves under a tree near a well. Loud cries arose from the village, and they soon learned that the king's favourite was dead.

A servant, overcome with grief, came to draw some water. Lie said to her: "What disaster has happened, that you are weeping so and the whole village is plunged in grief?" She said: "It is because our good mistress, the king's favourite, is dead."

"What?" said Lie. "All this fuss for a little thing like that? Go and tell the king to cease lamenting, for I can bring dead people back to life, even though they have been dead for several years."

The king sent a fine sheep to the strangers, to welcome them, and told Lie to wait a while, and he would call upon his talent at a suitable time.

The next day, and the day after that, the king again sent a fine sheep, with the same message to Lie. Lie pretended to lose patience, and sent word to the king that he was going to leave the next morning unless he were called upon. The king commanded Lie to appear before him next day.

At the hour set, Lie appeared before the king. The king began by asking the price of his services, and at last offered him a hundredth part of all he possessed. Lie refused, saying:

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"I want the half of your possessions." Before witnesses the king accepted.

Then Lie ordered a large hut to be built, just beside the spot where the favourite was buried. When the hut was built and roofed Lie entered it alone, with some tools for digging, and made sure that all the openings were well closed.

After a long spell of what seemed desperate work, they could hear Lie talking aloud, as though he were quarreling with several people; then he came out and said to the king: "Here's a pretty state of affairs! As soon as I had brought your wife to life again your father caught hold of her by the feet, saying, 'Let go of this woman! What use is she on the earth? What can she do for you? If, on the other hand, you bring me back to life, I will give you not one half but three quarters of my son's possessions, for I am far richer than he.' He had scarcely finished when his father appeared, pushed him aside, and in his turn offered me even the whole of your possessions; then he in turn was pushed aside by his father, who offered me still more. The truth is that all your ancestors are there now, and I don't know which one to listen to. But to cut matters short, tell me one thing only: which shall I bring back to life, your father or your wife?"

The king did not hesitate an instant. "My wife," he said. For he trembled at the mere thought of that terrible old man, who had kept him so long in tutelage, reappearing once more.

"Doubtless," said Lie. "But you see your father offers me a great deal more than you promise, and I really can't let such a chance go by . . . unless," he added, seeing how frightened the king was, "unless you will give me the same sum to be rid of him that you promised to give me for bringing your wife back to life."

"That would certainly be best!" cried all the marabouts, who had helped in the assassination of the late king.

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"Oh, well!" said the king with a deep sigh. "Let my father stay where he is, and my wife with him."

So it was settled, and Lie received, for not having brought anyone back to life at all, one half the riches of the king, who promptly remarried in order to forget his loss.

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CHAPTER NINE

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TOTEMISM

33. THE LEGEND OF THE ELEPHANT (*Fan*)

In those days, and that was very long ago, further back than one can think, mankind lived all together in one big village, and the animals did the same, each in his village, each according to his race; the antelopes with the antelopes, the boars with the boars, the tigers with the tigers, the monkeys with the monkeys.

But in each village, as chief, there lived an elephant, and the elephants were thus scattered, each family of elephants commanding a different village. The chief of them all, the father elephant, lived alone in the forest, but when there was a palaver everyone appeared before him, and he judged with wisdom. When the father elephant thought that his time had come, he passed on his spirit to his successor and disappeared. Never, never was he seen again, but his spirit remained alive.

The men lived apart, far, far in the forest, and no animal lived with them, not one, not even a dog. I know nothing at all about the chickens, but I think the chickens must have lived with the other birds.

The men were apart; they ate the fruits of the forest, but often too they killed animals and ate their flesh, and then there were palavers without end. The animals came and complained to the elephant; the elephant ordered the men to appear, but they never came, and they continued to kill the animals.

There were so many complaints against the men that the

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elephant said at last: "Since they will not come here I must go to their village."

He made preparations for his journey and set off for the men's village. But first he had to find this village, and that was quite difficult, for the men had hidden it very well. The elephant set out: on his way he came first of all to the tiger village.

"Where are you going, father elephant?"

"I am going to the men's village, to judge their palaver with you."

"That's a good idea. We'll go with you."

"No, they would be too frightened. I would rather go alone."

And the elephant said that because he knew very well that Nzame had created the men, and that the chief of the men was the son of Nzame, like himself.

"Very well. Go alone, father elephant, but first rest a day in our village."

The elephant agreed, because they treated him very well, and he stayed two whole days in the tiger village. He would have stayed three days, and even longer, but there was nothing left to eat. So he continued his journey, and came to the antelope village.

"And where are you going, father elephant?"

"I am going to the men's village to judge their palavers, for I am getting tired of them."

"That's a very good idea; we'll go with you."

"No, I would rather go alone, for perhaps they might kill you in the night."

And the antelopes answered: "Very well, but at least stay two days with us."

And the father elephant willingly agreed, for the antelopes treated him very well, and he stayed two whole days in their

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village. He would have stayed three days, and even longer, but there was nothing left to eat and he was very hungry.

Father elephant then went to the boars' village. And so, from village to village, the elephant continued on his way.

For some time past, however, the chief of the men, who often consulted his fetich (an antelope with a mirror imbedded in it), had known of the elephant's journey. That he did not want at all. And so in all the paths which led to his village from far, far away, he, together with the other men and with women who carried the earth, dug deep pits, with pointed stakes at the bottom; three, four, five traps one after another, at one hour, two hours, three hours' march distant. And when the furthest pit was finished he said to his men: "Go and cut me some manioc stems."

And the men went and cut some manioc.

"Throw the stems down so that they cover the pit."

And the men laid the stems carefully, and some days after they began to sprout, so one no longer saw the bare wood. And at an hour's march from there, on the same path, the chief of the men had another pit dug. And he said to his men: "Go and fetch some potato stalks."

And they went, and came back with a lot of potato stalks. And their chief said: "Lay these stalks over the pit."

And they laid them well, so that the pit could not be seen.

And so he had five different pits dug along the path, each with a different plant. And on each path leading to the village, he had five pits dug like this. The chief of the men was very cunning! He thought to himself: "If the elephant sees a heap of manioc in his path he will suspect something, for he is very clever." And so on the path, a long, long way off, at four or five different places, he had manioc thrown down; but underneath this there was no pit; and further on still, after the

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first pit, he put more manioc again, and then potatoes, and then other plants. He put them all along the road!

Father elephant was then on his way to reach the men's village. And there on the road he came upon a heap of manioc. He turned it over and over with his trunk, for he was very wily, but he found nothing at all suspicious. "It is a present from my children," he said. "They wanted to leave food for me along the road; they are very good." But as he was still a little suspicious he only ate a tiny piece of the manioc.

It was good; he ate a second piece, and then the whole heap of it; there was not very much, and father elephant was very big, much bigger than the elephants nowadays. A little further on there was a fresh heap of manioc. Father elephant drew near cautiously, then he bit a little piece; nothing suspicious. "Ah," he said. "What good children!" And he ate the whole heap, for father elephant was big and the heap was very little. And father elephant had walked a long, long way! And when evening came, there in the path he saw a fresh heap of manioc, and as he was very hungry again he rushed towards it.

Plop! This time it was the pit! And as father elephant ran very fast he fell head first, on the pointed stakes. And that was lucky for him! For otherwise the stake would have pierced his belly and he would have been dead. But his head broke the stake. And all night father elephant stayed in the bottom of the pit, crying and groaning: "I am dead!" But in the morning the chief of the men, who was near by with all his warriors, came to the edge of the pit.

"Why, what is this!" he exclaimed. "What? It is father elephant! Oh, how could he have fallen down there!" And at once he began to throw earth and branches into the hole, but as soon as he saw that the pit was nearly filled up and the elephant just about to climb out he scuttled away with all his men as fast as he could.

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Father elephant however climbed out of the pit, and, all bruised and smarting, very angry, went on his way; but his head ached very much, his eyes were all full of earth and he could hardly manage to walk! At last, after many adventures, and many appeals both to his great fetiches and to all the other elephants, father elephant overcame all the obstacles and reached the men's village.

But when he arrived, there was no one there! At his command, all the other animals gathered together and went in chase of the men, to bring them back. The monkeys pursued them in the trees, the boars and tigers in the forests, the birds called out when they found their hiding-places, the snakes bit them from the grass, and at last they were brought back to judgment.

The men then were brought before father elephant, and the chief of the men was very much afraid in his heart, for he saw death before him. He went cold all over, for who has seen what lies beyond death? Death is like the moon; no one has seen the other side of it.

The chief of the men was cold . . . he shivered. But father elephant said: "Do you confess your sin?" And the chief of the men said: "I confess it."

"Then you now look upon death."

"O father elephant, I am so small and you are so strong! O pardon, pardon!"

And father elephant replied: "It is true; I am strong and you are weak, but Nzame has made you chief. Therefore I pardon you."

And the chief of the men cried: "Thank you! Thank you!" And his heart was content.

But the chief of the tigers came forth, furious.

"Father elephant, you have not spoken well! These men have killed my brother; I want vengeance!"

And so the man paid gifts to the tiger. And then the ele-

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phant said, "Now you shall 'make brothers' and the quarrel will be over."

The chief of the men called his brother and said to him: "Make the blood exchange with the tiger." And the tiger chief said to his brother: "Make the blood exchange with the men." The man made the blood exchange and the tiger made the blood exchange, and they dwelt as brothers in the same village.

But the eagle chief came forward in his turn, and made the same palaver, and the boar chief and the gorilla chief, and many others, but they exchanged blood, and the palaver was ended.

And when the palavers were all decided the elephant chief said in his turn: "I want to make brother with the man chief." So they killed a kid, for these had not made brother; he was the slave of man. They killed a big male kid, and father elephant and father man made brothers. Father elephant recognized the fetiches of father man and father man recognized the fetiches of father elephant. And ever since that time father elephant has become the *ototore* of men, and that is why they honour him very much. Those who do not honour him are savages.

Amana. That is the end.

34. KHOEDI-SEFOUBENG (*Basuto*)

There was once a chief named Boulane who had ten wives; the favourite was called Morongo. Boulane had on his chest the image of a full moon, and for that reason he was surnamed Khoedi-Sefoubeng (Moon-on-the-chest). During a certain year the chief said one day to all his wives: "The queen will give birth to a child who will resemble me, bearing the image of a full moon; the others will have children marked with quarter

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moons, or simply stars. The son of Morongo shall be called Khoedi-Sefoubeng after me."

On the day when Khoedi-Sefoubeng's wives were to be brought to bed, the second wife said to the old woman who was to deliver Morongo: "If you see that Morongo's child has the mark of a full moon on its chest, kill it and put a puppy in its place."

When Morongo's child was born the old woman took it without the mother seeing it, and threw it in the back of the hut, among the pots. There the mice took care of the infant and fed it.

The chief asked about the children of his various wives. They told him: "One has given birth to a quarter moon, others to stars. As for Morongo, she brought forth a puppy." Then the chief abandoned the first wife for the second. Morongo became her servant.

One day when the second wife passed by Morongo's hut she saw a very beautiful child, bearing on his chest a perfect image of the full moon; some mice were playing with him. That evening she said to her husband: "I am ill. The knucklebones say I can only be cured by burning the hut of Morongo, who gave birth to a puppy, so as to kill all the mice that are in it." The chief said to her: "Good! It shall be burned tomorrow."

Then the mice took the infant to Thamaha, the big red ox striped with white stripes. They said to him: "Take good care of this child, because tomorrow they are going to kill us." Thamaha agreed to take care of Morongo's child. Next day Morongo's hut was burned, and all the mice perished.

One day when the chief's wife went to fetch dung in the cattle pasture she saw the child playing with Thamaha. She went straight to her husband and said: "I am ill, but the knucklebones say that I shall get well again if you have

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Thamaha killed." The chief said: "He shall be killed tomorrow."

Then Thamaha went to the crabs and said to them: "You must take care of this child, for tomorrow they are going to kill me." The crabs took charge of the child, and for a long time brought it up. One day the chief's wife said to the other women: "Let us gather some reeds to braid mats." She saw in the pond the little boy, now grown quite big, who was playing with the crabs. She said to the other women: "I feel ill; we must go home." When she got back she said to her husband: "I am very ill, but the knucklebones say I shall get well again if you have the pond drained so that all the crabs die, and if you have all the reeds cut down." The chief replied: "Tomorrow I will do as you wish."

Then the crabs took the little boy to the merchants, telling them: "Take care of him, for tomorrow they will kill us." Next day the chief had the pond drained and all the reeds cut. The child grew up in the merchants' hut. One day some of Boulane's people came to trade with the merchants. One of them noticed that the young man had something shining on his chest; he returned to Boulane and said: "I have just seen a very handsome young man with the image of a full moon on his chest." Boulane hastened to see the young man. He asked him: "Whose son are you, and who brought you here?"

Then the young boy told him all that had happened. He said: "When my mother gave birth to me my father's second wife had me thrown in the back of the hut among the pots. The mice rescued me and took care of me; as for my father's second wife, she put a puppy in my place and pretended that it was my mother's child." When Boulane heard this he looked at the young man very closely, for he remembered his second wife saying that the first wife had given birth to a puppy. Then the young man continued to tell him all that had happened,

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how first the mice had taken care of him, then Thamaha, then the crabs, up to day when he had taken refuge with the merchants.

Then the father uncovered the young man's chest and saw that he really bore the image of the full moon, and knew that he was really his own son. He took him with him to his village and hid him in his hut. Then he called a public meeting of all the tribe.

A great feast was prepared; they killed oxen and made plenty of yoala. Then Boulane had straw mats laid down in front of the hut where he had hidden his son, Khoedi-Sefoubeng. When all were gathered together he led his son out and presented him to all the people, telling them how his second wife had for many years deceived him. Khoedi-Sefoubeng's mother was restored to all her rights; they removed the rags she wore and reclothed her in fine new garments.

As for the wife who had persecuted her and wanted to have her killed, she was driven away with all her children and forced to take refuge in a far-off country.

35. THE ROAMER-OF-THE-PLAIN (*Ronga*)

I

A man and his wife had first a son, then a daughter. When the daughter had been bought in marriage the parents said to the son: "Now we have a herd of cattle for you; it is the right moment for you to take a wife. We will find you a nice wife, the daughter of good people."

But he refused absolutely. "No," he said, "don't put yourselves to any trouble. I don't like the girls about here. If I do marry I will find someone to my own taste."

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"Do as you like," said his parents. "But if later on misfortune falls on you, don't blame us."

He set out, leaving his country, and went far, far away, to an unknown land. Coming to a village he saw some young girls pounding maize, while others cooked. He made his choice then and there, saying to himself: "That is the one that suits me!"

Then he went to the men of the village.

"Good day, my fathers," he said to them.

"What do you wish?"

"I have come to see your daughters, for I want to take a wife."

"Very well, we will show them to you, and you shall choose."

The girls were then all led before him, and he pointed out the one he wanted. She gave her consent.

"Your parents will come and see us, will they not, and bring the dowry themselves?" asked the young girl's parents.

"Not at all," he answered. "I have the dowry with me. Take it; here it is."

"Then perhaps they will come a little later to fetch your wife and take her home?"

"No, no! I am afraid they might insult you by speaking to her too sternly. Let me take her myself, now."

The bride's parents agreed, but took the young girl aside in a hut to give her some advice. "Be good to your parents-in-law; treat your husband well." They offered her a little girl to help her in the housework. But she refused. They offered her two, ten, twenty to choose from, proposing every girl in turn. "No, no," she said. "You must give me the village buffalo, our buffalo, the Roamer-of-the-Plain. He will serve me."

"What?" they said. "You know very well that all our lives depend upon him! Here he is well fed and taken care of. What

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will you do with him in a strange country? He will go hungry; he will die, and we shall all die with him."

"No! No!" she said. "I will take good care of him."

Before leaving her parents she took with her a little pot containing a packet of medicinal herbs, a horn for bleeding, a little knife to cut with and a calabash full of grease.

She set out with her husband. The buffalo followed them, but he was visible only to her. The man could not see him. He had no idea that the Roamer-of-the-Plain was the helper who accompanied his wife.

II

When they reached the husband's village all the family met them with cries of joy. "Hoyo! Hoyo-hoyo!"

"What!" cried the old people. "So you have found a wife! You wouldn't take those we proposed to you, but never mind. That is good! You did as you chose. If you have any trouble you mustn't blame us."

The husband went with his wife to the fields and showed her which were his and which were his mother's. She took note of everything and returned with him to the village. But on the way she said: "I dropped my beads in the field; I must go back and get them." This was in order to see the buffalo.

She said to him: "You see the outskirts of the fields? Stay there. There is a wood there too where you can hide." He said: "Very well."

When she wanted to go for water she had only to cross the cultivated fields and set down her jar there where the buffalo was. He ran to fetch it at the lake, and brought back the jar filled to his mistress. When she wanted wood he went into the jungle, broke down the trees with his horns and brought as much as was needed. The village people were astonished. "How strong she is!" they said. "She has come back from the

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well already! And in the twinkling of an eye she has gathered her bundle of dead wood!" But no one guessed that she was helped by a buffalo who took the place of a little servant.

Only she brought him nothing to eat, for she had only one plate for herself and her husband. Now at home they had kept a plate specially for the Roamer-of-the-Plain, and they fed him with care. He was hungry. She brought her jar and sent him for water. He went, but he felt the sharp pangs of hunger.

She showed him a corner of the jungle to clear. During the night the buffalo took the pick, and made an enormous field. "How clever she is!" said everyone. "How quickly she works!"

But in the evening he said to his mistress: "I am starving, and you give me nothing to eat! I cannot work any more."

"Alas," she said. "What can I do? The people at home were right when they said you would have to steal. Yes, steal! Come into my field and take a bean here and a bean there. Then go further on. Don't destroy everything in the same place. Perhaps the owners won't notice it much, and they won't die of shock!"

During the night the buffalo came, he snatched a bean here and a bean there. He jumped from one corner to another, then he went and hid himself. In the morning when the women came out to the fields they could not believe their eyes.

"Hey! Hey; He-ee-ee-y! What is this? We have never seen the like before. A wild beast that ravages our fields, and we can even see his tracks! Ho! The country is in a bad way!" And they ran to tell the news in the village.

That night the young woman came and said to the buffalo: "They were surprised but not too much. Their backs were not broken by it. Tonight you must go and steal further away."

This he did. The owners of the ravaged fields made a great fuss. They spoke to the men, and begged them to stay on guard with their guns.

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The young woman's husband was a good marksman. He went to his field and waited. The buffalo, thinking that perhaps they would not lie in wait for him at the spot where he had stolen the night before, returned to eat his mistress's beans, just where he had browsed the first day. "What?" said the man. "So it's a buffalo. We have never seen one here before. This is a strange thing." He fired. The ball entered near the ear-hole, by the temple, and came out on the other side in the same place. The Roamer-of-the-Plains made one leap and fell dead.

"I made a good shot!" cried the hunter. And he went back to tell the people in the village.

Immediately his wife began to groan and double herself up. "Oh, oh! I have bellyache!"

"Calm yourself!" he said to her. She pretended to be ill, but really it was only to explain her shock and tears on hearing of the buffalo's death. They gave her some medicine but she threw it behind her without anyone seeing.

III

Everyone rose, the women with their baskets, the men with their weapons, to go and cut up the buffalo. She remained alone in the village. But soon she went to join them, still clutching her belt, groaning and crying.

"What are you doing here?" asked her husband. "If you are ill, stay at home."

"No, I did not want to stay alone in the village."

Her mother-in-law scolded her, telling her she did not know what she was doing, and that she would kill herself acting this way.

When they had filled the baskets with meat she said: "Let me carry the head."

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"No, you are too ill. It is too heavy for you."

"No," she said. "Let me have it!" She took up her load and went.

When she reached the village, instead of going into her house she went into the shed where the pots were kept and there laid the buffalo's head down. She stayed there stubbornly. Her husband came to find her and bring her into the hut, saying that she would be better there. "Don't bother me!" she replied harshly.

Her mother-in-law came in her turn, and spoke gently to her. "Why do you worry me?" she asked sharply. "Can't you let me sleep a little?" They brought her some food, but she pushed it aside. Night came. Her husband went to bed but he did not sleep; he lay and listened.

She went to fetch some fire, put water to heat in her little pot and dropped in it the packet of medicine she had brought from home. Then she took the buffalo's head and with her razor made cuts in front of the ear, near the temple, where the bullet had gone in. She applied the horn, sucked and sucked with all her strength. She succeeded in drawing some clots of blood, and then some liquid blood. After this she held the place in the steam of the boiling water in the pot, rubbing it all the while with grease from the calabash. This done, the wound was relieved. Then she sang:

O my father, Roamer-of-the-Plain!
They told me truly, they told me truly, Roamer-of-the-Plain,
They said: thou goest in the depths of darkness, thou wanderest on all sides during the night, Roamer-of-the-Plain!
Thou art the young castor-oil plant which grows on the ruins, which dies before its time, devoured by the worm!
Thou who droppest flowers and fruits in thy course, Roamer-of-the-Plain!

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When she had finished her incantation, the head moved. The limbs came back. The buffalo began to feel himself alive again, he shook his ears and his horns; he stood up and stretched his limbs.

But now the husband, who had not been asleep in his hut, came out, saying: "Why is my wife weeping all this time? I must go and see why she groans so." He came into the pot shed and called her. She answered in an angry voice: "Leave me alone!" But the buffalo head fell back on the ground, pierced through as before.

The husband returned to his hut, understanding nothing, and having seen nothing. Then she took the pot again, boiled the medicine, made the cuts, applied the horn, exposed the wound to the steam and sang as before:

O my father, Roamer-of-the-Plain,
They told me truly, they told me truly, Roamer-of-the-Plain,
They said: thou goest in the depths of darkness, thou wanderest on all sides during the night, Roamer-of-the-Plain!
Thou art the young castor-oil plant which grows on the ruins, which diest before its time, devoured by the worm!
Thou who droppest flowers and fruit in thy course, Roamer-of-the-Plain!

The buffalo rose up once more. His limbs returned. He began to feel himself alive again, he shook his ears and his horns, stretched himself. But the husband returned, uneasy, to see what his wife was doing. She became very angry with him. Then he stayed in the pot shed to see what was happening. She took her fire, her pot, all the rest of her utensils, and went outside. There she gathered some grass to make a clear fire and for the third time set herself to bring the buffalo back to life.

Dawn was already breaking, but her mother-in-law arrived

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and the head fell to earth once more. Daylight came; the wound mortified.

She said to them: "Let me go alone to the lake to wash myself." They answered her: "How will you get there, ill as you are?"

She went nevertheless, and returned saying: "I met someone on the road who comes from my home. He told me that my mother is very, very ill. I asked him to come to the village but he refused, for, he said, you would offer him food and that would delay him. So he went back at once, telling me to come quickly or my mother would die before I get there. So now good-bye; I am going."

Now all this was lies. She had had the idea of going to the lake in order to arrange this whole story and find some excuse to go back to her own people and break the news to them of the death of their buffalo.

IV

With her basket on her head she set out, singing as she went the song of the Roamer-of-the-Plain. The people followed after her wherever she went and accompanied her to the village. There she broke the news to them that the buffalo was no more.

They sent messengers in all directions to gather together all the people of the country. They reproached the young woman bitterly, telling her: "You see, it is just as we said. You refused all the young girls that we offered you, and you would have the buffalo! You have brought death upon us all!"

They were all gathered there when the husband, who had followed his wife, entered the village. He sat down, leaning his forehead against a tree-trunk. Then everyone came to salute him, saying: "Hail, criminal! Hail, you who have killed us all!" He did not understand, and wondered why they called him murderer and criminal.

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"I have killed a buffalo, certainly," he thought, "but that is all!"

"Yes, but this buffalo was your wife's helper. He went to draw water for her; he cut her wood, he worked her field."

The husband, astonished, said to them: "Why didn't you tell me? I would never have killed it."

"And now you see," they added. "Our life depended upon him."

All then began to cut their throats, the young woman first of all, crying:

"Alas, my father, Roamer-of-the-Plain!"

Then her parents, her brothers, her sisters came one after another and did the same; one said:

"Thou who goest in the depths of darkness!"

The other replied: "Thou who wanderest on all sides during the night!"

Another: "Thou who droppest flowers and fruits in thy course . . ."

They all cut their throats, and even killed the little children they carried in skins on their backs; for, they said, what use to let them live when they would only go mad.

The husband returned home and told his people how he found that he had killed the whole tribe in killing their buffalo. His parents said to him: "You see, now! Didn't we tell you trouble would fall upon you? When we offered you the choice of some good and suitable girl you made a fuss. Now you have lost all your fortune! Who will give it back to you, now that they are all dead, the relatives of the wife to whom you gave your money?"

That is the end.

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36. TANGALIMILINGO (*Nyassa*)

Some boys went out to hunt game. They found plenty in the forest. They hunted and killed a great quantity; rabbits, water-antelopes, guineafowl, partridges and forest antelopes.

They said to themselves: "We will go to our hut and prepare some food."

They arrived and sat down. Other people came also to the spot where they were, other hunters like themselves. They all stayed in the same place, cut some sticks and lighted a fire.

By-and-by a leopard came, and carried off the antelope they had prepared.

Upon this some men went in pursuit of the leopard. Meantime there came an eland who ate all the game. When the men had hunted the leopard without success they decided to turn back. On returning to their resting-place they found that all the game had disappeared.

"Who has eaten our meat?" they cried.

They looked carefully, but could discover no one. Only one young man stayed behind. While all the rest were out searching for the game an eland came and ate the young man up.

Not finding the person who had stolen their game, the hunters returned once more, and found that the young man had disappeared. He had with him a knife in a sheath.

When they saw that he had disappeared they began to look about again, but could find nothing. So they said:

"Let us go home, since this young man is lost and someone has taken all our game. We can find neither the young man nor the one who carried him off."

So they set out and returned to their home. When they were nearing the village they began to sing aloud, making up a song.

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We will talk of Tangalimilingo;
They have taken him;
He has been carried off by the water-people.
Cock, you are a hen, a real hen;
We shall be killed.
We will speak of Tangalimilingo;
They have taken him;
He has been taken by the water-people.
Cock, you are a hen, a real hen.

They reached home.

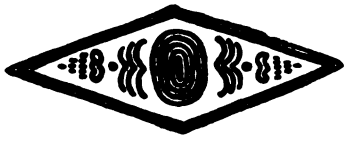
But where was Tangalimilingo? When he saw that he was in the eland's belly he drew his knife and cut the belly in two.

Thus he escaped without the eland killing him; for that reason people never kill the eland, because it was once Tangalimilingo.

Then Tangalimilingo made a song, singing:

Can you believe it, can you believe it?
He who disappeared has drunk the children's milk;
He is walking on the paths,
He stops at the door.

Thus he reached home, and the women were very delighted. They sang songs and killed cattle in honour of the spirit which had brought the young man back.



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CHAPTER TEN

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HISTORICAL LEGENDS

37. THE GREAT DEEDS OF SAMBA GUELADIO DIEGUI (*Torodo*)

THIS is the story of Samba Gueladio Diegui, Peuhl prince of Fouta.

Samba Gueladio Diegui was the son of Gueladio, king of Fouta. When Samba arrived at the age of adolescence his father died. The brother of the dead king, Konkobo Moussa, took command of the country. Konkobo had eight sons. When they grew to manhood he announced that he would divide Fouta between them, and each of them received his portion.

Samba remained with his mother, his griot, named Sevi Malallaya and a slave called Doungourou.

The griot Sevi came to Samba. He was weeping. Samba asked him: "Why do you weep?" "I weep," replied the griot, "because your father Konkobo has divided Fouta between his boys. And as your father was no longer there, Konkobo has not kept a share for you."

Samba rose at once. He went to his uncle and said to him: "Well, papa, and where is my share?"

"I am going to give something to you too," Konkobo replied. "The first horse that you come across in the Fouta, take it; it is yours."

Samba returned. He went to his griot and said to him: "My papa has given me a share, too!" "And what has he given you?" "He has given me permission to take the first good horse that I find."

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The griot said: "But that is nothing at all that he gives you! He has acted very badly towards you."

Samba went back to his uncle, Konkobo. "Papa," he said to him, "I don't want your present. It is not what I need. Give me what is due to me; I ask nothing else."

His uncle replied: "I saw a superb bull in Fouta. I saw a very pretty woman, too. Take them both; I make you a present of them."

Samba went again to Sevi the griot. "Well," he said, "my papa has given me a beautiful Fouta woman and an ox. All that I can have if I choose to take it!"

"That is worth nothing," said the griot. "It is like what he gave you before. If you find a beautiful woman who is married, and you take her, her husband will kill you. You are a child, and you don't understand anything."

Samba went back once again. "Well, papa," he said, "I don't want what you offer me. What I want is my share of Fouta."

"If you really want it," said Konkobo, "you had better set about taking it. If not, so much the worse for you."

Samba went away. He saddled his mare Oumoullatoma. He set out with his griot Sevi Malallaya and his slave Doungourou, his mother, and the slaves destined for his wife. At that time he was not yet married. He said: "I am going to leave Fouta."

He went as far as a village called Tiabo. It was close to Bakel. He called the king of that country and said to him: "Tounka, I entrust to you my mother and the mother of my griot. You must provide for their needs and for those of my people until I return. Give them food and clothing. Lodge them well. Or else when I return, if I find that they have lacked food or clothing, I will cut your head off."

After this Samba and his griot crossed the river without

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further delay. They set out for a country the king of which was named Ellel Bildikri, to ask for warriors to help them in attacking Konkobo Moussa, Samba's uncle.

They marched for forty-five days through the jungle before reaching the Peuhl country. I have forgotten the name of the king of this country. As soon as he saw Samba he said: "Here is a fine boy! He must be the son of a king."

He had oxen killed and sheep killed, and presented them to Samba, saying: "All this is for you." He called his daughters and told them: "Go and visit Samba, who is leaving tomorrow. Talk to him and amuse him."

The young Peuhl girls stayed with Samba. They amused themselves together. Presently they left him. "It is too hot," they said. "We are going to bathe."

When they had gone Samba lay down on his bed to sleep. One of the young girls had taken off her gold necklace and had forgotten it on leaving. While Samba was sleeping an ostrich came into the hut and swallowed the necklace.

The young girls returned and woke Samba. "I forgot my necklace a little while ago," one of them said. "Where is it?"

They searched, but could not find it.

"Oh," said Samba, "do you think I have stolen your necklace?"

"No," replied the young girl. "But all the same I was the last to leave, and there were only us two in the hut."

"Very well," Samba murmured.

The young girl went to her father.

"I left my gold necklace with this man who came here, and now I can't find it."

"Do you think he took it?" the king asked.

"I don't know at all. There were only us two in the hut."

The king did not say what he thought about this. He only asked his daughter to return to Samba.

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Meantime Samba had examined the ground. He found the tracks of the ostrich's feet. So he went to the king, leaving the young girl in the hut. "I will give you a calabash full of gold," he said, "if you will sell me your ostrich."

"Agreed," said the king. "You can have it."

Samba immediately called some men and ordered them to kill the ostrich. "When you have killed it," he said, "open its body and bring us whatever you find inside."

The men obeyed, and returned to Samba in the presence of the king's daughter. In the ostrich's stomach was the gold necklace. Samba said to the young girl: "You accused me of stealing the necklace. I shall have you put in chains." And the king left him free to act as he chose.

But the griot, Sevi, intervened. "You are wrong to act like this, Samba. We have left our own country to come here, and there are only five of us. Leave the king's daughter alone, and don't seek to make her captive."

Samba listened to his griot's advice. And the next day they set out again for the kingdom of Ellel Bildikri.

They marched fifteen days more in the jungle, and they ran short of water. "Samba," said the griot, "I can go no further! I am about to die." Samba led Sevi to the shade of a tree and said to him, and to the slave Dougourou: "Wait for me here." He mounted his mare Oumoullatoma, went on his way for two hours and at last reached a pool.

There he saw a very tall bogy taking a bath.

The bogy turned towards him, and fire came out from all parts of his body. Samba was not frightened. He looked him straight in the face.

Then the bogy made himself so tall that he touched the sky with his head. "What are you doing now?" asked Samba calmly. "Are you trying to see if I am afraid of you?"

The bogy made himself smaller. "Never," he said, "have

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I seen a man as brave as you are! Well, I am going to make you a present." And he gave him a gun. "Samba," he said, "do you know what the name of this gun is?"

"No," replied Samba. "I don't know it."

"It is called Boussalarbi," said the bogy. "If you so much as draw it from the holster your enemy will fall dead."

Samba took the goat-skin from his shoulders. He went into the pool to get water, and when the skin was filled he put it on his mare's back. "Good," he said. "Now I will see if what the bogy told me is true or not."

He drew the gun from its holster and the bogy fell dead.

This done Samba returned to the spot where he had left his people and found his father, the griot, who sang Samba's praises. He gave water to drink both to him and to the slave. The griot said then: "Well, Samba, what was that gun shot that I heard in the distance?"

"It was I who fired," replied Samba. And he told him about the adventure with the bogy and what he had done with him. "That was wrong," replied the griot. "You did a very wrong thing. Someone makes you a present like that and you kill him. You have acted very unjustly."

"I did well," replied Samba. "If I happened to pass that way, others might pass as well. I am not the only king's son. There are many king's sons in Fouta, and many brave ones among them. They are all as daring as I. Today the bogy gave this gun to me, and tomorrow he would have made the same present to someone else. Now he is through with making presents! No one else can possess a gun like mine. I am the only person to own such a marvellous thing."

After this they decided to go further on. After several days they reached the capital of Ellel Bildikri's country. It was a larger town than Saint-Louis. For nearly a year there they had not drunk fresh water. A huge cayman lived in the river and

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prevented the inhabitants from taking any water. Every year they gave up to this cayman a young girl, well dressed, with gold earrings, bracelets on her wrists and ankles—in a word, dressed like a king's daughter. The cayman was very particular, and if he did not consider her well enough dressed he refused the offering, and forbade them to renew their yearly provisions of drinking-water.

When Samba arrived it was the last day of the year, and the inhabitants were preparing for the morrow, when they would deliver a young girl to this cayman, Niabardi Dallo.

At about midnight Samba stopped at the hut of some slaves a little outside the village. He called the slave who was in the hut and said: "Give me some water, for I am thirsty." The slave went inside. There was in her jar just about as much water as would fill a small cup, and even this was putrid. None the less she brought it to Samba.

He took the water, smelt it, and finding a bad odour struck the woman, who fell down a few steps away. "What!" he cried. "I ask for water, and you bring me filth like this!"

"Oh, my friend," the woman replied, "there is no more water in the country! Before we can have any more we must sacrifice the king's daughter."

"Well, go," Samba ordered. "Show me the way to the river. I am going to water my mare at once."

The slave was terrified. "I am afraid to go to the river," she said. "Tomorrow the king will see the tracks of my feet on the road and he will ask: 'Why did you go there where I have forbidden anyone to go?' "

Samba grew angry. "If you refuse to take me," he threatened her, "you shall perish by my hand! Take the halter, Doungourou, and put it round Oumoullatoma's neck. And you, woman, walk in front of me."

The slave started out, leading the mare after him. The

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woman showed them the road. "It leads straight to the river," she said to Samba, who had pity on her fear, thanked her and let her go back.

Samba walked till he reached the river. He ordered the slave to take off his clothes and go into the river with the mare to bathe her. The slave took off his garments and went into the water. And immediately, from the middle of the river, Niabardi Dallo the cayman called to them.

"Who goes there?" he cried. "A new-comer," Samba replied.

"Well, new-comer, what are you doing here?"

"I am going to drink."

"If you have come to drink, drink alone and don't let your horse drink!"

"The new-comer is going to water his mare," Samba replied. He drank, and with him his slave. "Go back into the river, Doungourou."

The slave obeyed. The mare grazed the water with her hoof. The cayman said: "New-comer, if you want to know, you make me tired!"

Niabardi rose in the middle of the river, and all the water around him shone like fire. "If what you see frightens you," cried Samba to Doungourou, "and if you let go of my mare, I will kill you as well as the cayman!" After these words the slave held tight to the mare.

The cayman came towards them opening his jaws wide, one above and one below, and fire spouted from his throat. When he was quite near Samba fired at him. The cayman was dead, and the whole river turned the colour of blood.

Now that the cayman was killed Samba filled his goat-skin bag with water. He put the bag on the mare and they returned to the hut to settle down and take some rest. They gave some water to the slave whose hut they were sharing.

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The woman was amazed. "How did you get all that water?" she asked. And Samba said: "Your tongue is too long. As long as we give you water all you have to do is to drink it, and not worry yourself about where it comes from."

After having killed the cayman Samba had cut off a piece and brought it with him. He also left in the place of combat his bracelets and his sandal, for he knew very well that no one else would be able to put them on. Samba's feet were very small.

The next day the king Ellel Bildikri gathered all the griots together to take the young girl to the cayman, so he would allow the inhabitants to get their provision of water.

They fetched the young virgin and set her on a horse. All the griots followed, singing: "Ah, young girl, how brave you are! The cayman has eaten your big sister! He has eaten your other sister too, and yet you are not afraid of him! Now we shall have some water!"

Thus the griots sang. They sang of the hundred victims whom the cayman had devoured. Now they reached the river. They led the young girl down. Formerly the other young girls had waded a little way into the water and then the cayman came and snapped them up. The girl they brought today went into the river and waded out till the water reached her chest. She climbed on the head of the cayman, and stood there. "The cayman is here," she said, "and I am standing on his head."

The people said: "The cayman is angry. You must have had relation with a man! You are no longer a virgin! Oh, what a misfortune! It is an evil day for us. You are a shameless girl!"

And they went at once to fetch another young girl. The first one, however, defended herself indignantly. "You lie!" she cried. "No man has touched me since the day I was born! I have never shared a man's bed!"

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The other young girl consented to be sacrificed to the cayman. She also climbed up beside the first one. Now both of them were standing on the cayman's head.

And her father cried: "The cayman is dead!"

"Let everyone go into the river!" the king ordered. "We shall see whether it is true or not!"

Everyone went in, and they found it was really true.

"Well," said the king, "the first who says he has killed the cayman, and can prove it, shall have whatever he asks of me!"

There were a bunch of liars there who cried: "I killed him!" "I came here last night!" "The cayman tried to eat me and I killed him!"

Each told his story, to prove to the king that he was the real slayer of the cayman and should have the reward.

A slave who was there picked up the bracelets and a sandal. "Here are the victor's bracelets," he said, "and here is his sandal. It is the man to whom these belong who has killed the cayman. It is he who will receive the reward!"

All came to try them on. But no one succeeded. The captive woman then came forward. "There is a new-comer here," she said. "He is staying in my hut. When he arrived he asked for some water. I gave him some putrid water; it was all I had. When I gave it to him he struck me. Then he went away, and stayed out for three hours. When he came back he gave me some fresh water. You need only call him to find out. For my part, I am sure it was he who killed the cayman."

Then the king sent men to fetch the new-comer. They found Samba in bed. They gave him a slap to wake him up. Samba, furious at being disturbed in his sleep, kicked them.

Then the king sent another man to try and wake him.

"Let me have my sleep out!" cried Samba. "If they send anyone else I will kill him!"

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The envoy returned. He told the king what had happened. "Very well," said the king. "I will wait till he has had his sleep out."

They waited two hours. At last Samba woke. He came to the river.

He saluted the king and the king returned his salute. Then he offered him a seat beside him, and told him to take his ease. Then taking the bracelets and the sandal he showed them to him. "Do these belong to you?" he asked.

Samba took from his pocket the other sandal, and put them both on.

"Well," said the king, "you shall come and stay with me." And he gave him a hut, very large and lofty, a real palace.

The king sent men to fetch Samba's belongings, bring his slaves and his mare. All were installed in the king's enclosure. They killed quantities of sheep; Samba stayed two months with the king, and he had young girls with him all the time. At the end of this time the king called his guest.

"With what intention did you come to this country? Is there anything you want?"

And Samba replied: "I only want fighting-men."

The king called all his notables, and said to them: "The slayer of the cayman asks us to give him some fighting-men."

"To go all the way to Fouta!" they exclaimed. "How can we do that!"

"This man," the king went on, "has come all the way from Fouta here. He has reached here. For a whole year we have not been able to get water. He has killed the monster that prevented us from drinking and all he asks in return is to have some fighting-men. We cannot possibly refuse him."

"Oh, well," replied the notables. "This is what we will do. There is a king called Birama N'Gourori. Let us send Samba Guenadio Diegui against this king to take his flocks and make

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us a present of them. Then we will let him have some fighting-men and we will go with him into his country to make war."

The only object of those who gave this advice was to get rid of Samba by false promises. They counted on his losing his life in the attack on Birama N'Gourori, for this king was very powerful.

To reach Birama N'Gourori's country Samba had to cross at least eighteen deltas, and between each of these deltas there was eight days' march, and even more. Birama's flocks were guarded by three hundred shepherds all dressed in red trousers and jackets, with red caps on their heads and red boots too, mounted on picked horses, white horses.

After crossing the marshes Samba came to these shepherds. He said to them: "I am going to take your cattle." They replied: "You are crazy! Before you take the cattle you will have to kill us all."

"Come on," Samba ordered. "March before me, and drive the cattle where I tell you."

The shepherds refused to obey him. They fell upon Samba, spear in hand. They struck him, but the spears glanced aside, for his charms were too powerful. And it was he who killed them all, with the exception of one alone.

Samba took captive the one he had spared. He cut off his ears and said to him: "Now go to Birama N'Gourori and tell him that I have taken his herds."

The man went. He reached the large hut belonging to Birama. The first person whom he asked to go and tell the king of the slaughter of his shepherds and the rape of his herds replied briefly: "No, I don't want to!"

That day Birama was still asleep. One of his wives, who was dressing her hair in the Peuhl fashion, said: "How can you tell such news to Birama?" Then they gathered some hamond from the bushes. Hamond is a perfumed gum which the Ouo-

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lofs call houmounguene or tiouraye. The fumes were wafted to Birama, and Birama woke up.

He saw the griots all making music on their violins.

"What is it? What is all this about?" These were his first words as he woke up. A man advanced, trembling. "Peuhl came to your shepherds. He wanted to take your cattle——"

He had no time to finish before Birama killed him. "Allah himself cannot steal my cattle!" cried the king in fury.

Another man drew near and told what had happened. Birama killed him also. He killed three like this. All the rest ran away.

Then Birama's sister came in, bringing some curdled milk. She set it before him, saying: "This is all you have left to eat, now, since the Peuhl has taken your cattle. There is nothing else to give you."

King Birama straddled his horse. He rode off in a fury and overtook Samba Gueladi behind the village. Samba stopped the cattle and waited for him quietly.

"Is it you who stole my cattle?"

"Yes, it was me. But I will leave you a few if you like. The rest I shall keep for myself."

"You may do so, perhaps," said Birama, "but first you will have to kill me!"

Samba took out his pipe. He struck his flint, lit the pipe and took several puffs. After which he said to Birama: "Well, take your time. Decide as you please."

That was how he talked to the king.

Birama thrust his spear firmly against Samba. The spear broke in two pieces. He quickly snatched another spear and thrust again. He struck with all his spears till there was only one left unbroken. Then Samba struck in his turn. His spear also broke.

Then he jumped on his mare and they both fought on horse-

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back, while beneath them the horses bit and fought furiously too. At last Samba won and Birama ran away.

They reached Birama's tata. This tata comprised at least eight enclosures, each with its gate. When Birama reached the first one the men let him pass, and fired upon Samba. Until the smoke of their guns had dispersed they thought Samba had fallen. But not at all, they saw him still chasing their king. And at each gate the same thing happened, until Biramba and Samba reached the very middle of the huts.

"If it were not for your sister's protection I would kill you," he said to the chief, "but I am her naoule (of the same blood) and I cannot refuse her request when she has done me no wrong." He returned to the herd, counted out three hundred cattle and sent them back to the king, saying: "This is a present I make to Birama and his sister."

There remained as many again, as the price of his victory over Birama N'Gourori. "You are a Peuhl like me," he said to the king, "so I cannot see you reduced to eating curdled milk."

And he departed, taking what he had kept of the herd.

He reached Ellel Bildikri's village. "Here are Birama N'Gourori's cattle," he said. "That's good," replied the king.

The notables came to the king. "This man has come here," they said. "He has killed Niabardi Dallo and what's more he has captured all Birama's herds! Our grandmothers said that no one would ever succeed in taking them, and yet he has done so! If we go out to war with him he will have us all killed!"

"Now you will be forced to give me some fighting-men," Samba said to them.

And the women of the country cried: "If our husbands are afraid to go with you we, the women, will accompany you!"

Ellel Bildikri called Samba and promised him some men in a few days' time.

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The village had four gates. Ellel Bildikri ordered some large tree trunks to be cut. They were to be used as steps of a staircase. When the wood was worn by the horses' feet it should be taken as a sign that sufficient horsemen had passed.

By each stairway Samba watched horses and horsemen passing for several days. At last he declared himself satisfied. "Now let the foot soldiers come out!" he said. And for several days more he watched the foot soldiers pass.

"That is enough!" he said. "Now we have only to set out."

So Samba set out for Fouta. When he was quite near he ordered his columns to continue their march beside the N'Guiguilone, following the river bank. Samba went to see his mother, whom he had entrusted to Tounka.

There were a great many horses in the column. On the day that Samba left to go to Tiyabo, in Fouta, Tounka said to himself: "Samba will certainly perish in the jungle!" And, having no more fear, he drove Samba's mother and her slaves out from the village.

The slaves took a waist-cloth, and made an awning with it like the Moorish tents, and they put Samba's mother under the waist-cloth to shelter her from the sun. Then they dispersed in the jungle to look for a little millet, and each time they saw a man bringing home his crop they followed him, to pick up whatever he let fall. They returned with what little they had been able to gather; with it they made a couscous, and adding some boiled leaves gave it to Samba's mother to eat.

It was about two o'clock. Some of the slaves stayed with Samba's mother. Suddenly they heard a griot. He called out: "Ouldou Guenadio Diegui!" which means: "I am afraid of Samba, I respect him as my master!" His voice was loud and clear. It was that of Sevi. Surely it was Samba coming!

The slaves cried: "It is a herald we hear! Undoubtedly Samba is arriving!" And Sevi's mother said: "Yes, I am sure

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that is my son singing." But Samba's mother replied sadly: "The griot is mad to sing like that, for my son is lost. I shall never see my boy again!" But at that very moment Samba's mare reached the river, and Samba himself crossed the water mounted on Oumoullatoma.

Then Tounka said to his men: "When Samba comes to ask for me, tell him I have been dead a long time!"

Now Samba was with his mother. He found her outside the village. "What does this mean?" he asked her.

"You see, my son, how Tounka has treated us since you went away!"

Samba said simply: "All right!"

He went to Tounka's house. He asked the people: "Where is Tounka? Go and bring him here."

"Tounka has been dead a long time."

"Take me to his grave. If he is dead I am going to light a fire and burn him."

They took him a little way off. "Here is where Tounka is buried."

Samba called his men, ordered them to dig in the spot that was pointed out to them, and found nothing. "Bring him out from his hut," he said. "I want him!"

They dragged Tounka out into the middle of the village. Samba remained seated on his mare. He took a branch, and stretching out his arm said: "Pile up all your jewels, gold, hangings and pieces of cloth till the heap is as high as my hand!"

They began to pile together gold, jewels and cloths. When the heap was a yard high Samba jumped from his horse on to the pile. He stamped down the cloths and said: "That is not enough! Bring more!" They brought more, and Sevi began to squash the heap down again until Samba said: "That is enough!" Then Samba addressed Tounka.

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"Another time, if I leave my mother with you, remember what I have just done, or wait till I catch you again!" He took with him the waist-cloths, the fabrics and the gold, and gave them to his mother and her people. Then he set out again on his way.

He went as far as Ouhoulde in Fouta. He passed, and kept on his way until he rejoined his columns by the N'Guilguilone. From there he sent a message to his uncle Konkobo telling him to be in readiness to fight him at Bilbaci. Then he took up his position on front of the N'Guiguilone.

At that moment his uncle was at Sadel, near Kayaedi. Samba went to him and saw that Konkobo was waiting with his army. In those days, before a battle, they held a great tom-tom, and the war drum which the griots used was called Alamari, and the dance which they danced was only permitted to brave boys, who had no fear. They called the dance also Alamari, and they danced it spear in hand.

The drum of which I speak was covered with the skin of a young girl. From where he stood Samba heard the sound of the tom-tom. "Well," he said, "I am going down there. I want to dance the Alamari!"

His griot, Sevi Malallaya, said: "Are you crazy? You must stay here till tomorrow."

But Samba replied: "Say what you like, I don't care! I am going."

Samba crossed the river. He went as far as the tom-tom and joined the circle of lookers-on. He covered his head with his waist-cloth, hiding his face. He went and danced, spear in hand.

And each said to himself: "But that is Samba Guenadio Diegui!" He never breathed a word. There he was in the tom-tom. He called his cousins, the sons of Konkobo Moussa and

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said to them: "Come, let's go to your father's house. We will have a chat there together."

There was a slave there named Mahounde Gali who had a bad eye. His son asked him: "Papa, how can you go and fight tomorrow in that state?"

"Bring me a pound of capsicum," replied his father. He spread the capsicums on his bad eye, and kept them there with a bandage. Then he lay down to rest, and when he took the bandage off his eye was all fiery red and he said: "When Samba's army sees a man with an eye all fiery red like this they will run away in terror!"

At six o'clock in the morning Samba's columns and those of Konkobo began to fight. Samba stayed lying down in Konkobo Moussa's house. He passed the night in joking with his cousins till sunrise. At that moment he said to them: "Bring me some water to wash myself."

He said this in front of everyone. Then he took his spear and went out from the village. He crossed the columns of Konkobo Moussa. Then he went towards his own columns and overtook them.

He found his mare, tethered to a stake. He ordered her to be saddled, and his slave saddled her. He mounted and set off at a gallop. He entered Konkobo's ranks. He drew his gun Boussalarbi from its holster, and at each shot he killed at least fifty warriors.

"What?" cried Konkobo's soldiers. "In the beginning of the battle we thought Samba's men were in flight, and not at all, they are still holding their ground!"

Then, discouraged, they deserted their chief. You should have seen how they ran! But Konkobo was not one to run away. When his horse fell dead he took some earth and filled his seroualla (trousers). If he wanted to run away now he could not, because the earth was too heavy.

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Samba killed all before him. And now he was face to face with Konkobo, standing on his dead horse. "Well, papa," he asked. "What has happened?"

"You see," replied Konkobo. "They have killed my horse."

Samba ran after one of Konkobo's horsemen. He killed him and brought the horse back. "Here, papa," he said. "Mount this horse and keep on fighting!"

Konkobo got in the saddle again. He threw himself on Samba's columns. His second horse was struck and fell dead.

Samba came to him again. "Well, papa?" he asked. "Have they killed another horse for you?" He went and killed another of Konkobo's horsemen. "Here, papa," he said to his uncle, "here is a new mount for you!"

Samba thus replaced, at least eight times, the horses that were killed beneath his uncle. He killed Konkobo's boys, he slaughtered everyone. Now he was lord of Fouta.

He took his uncle Konkobo aside from the village and said to him: "Stay there, from now on. You shall beg charity from me."

After Samba died and they had buried him in the ground a Peuhl passed near his grave and saw the ancient king's skull sticking out from the earth. "Ah," he said. "There is a pig's head which thinks it isn't dead!" He raised his staff and struck the skull with it. The stick broke and a flash of lightning pierced the Peuhl's eye and killed him.

The bambados of Fouta said: "Samba cannot die: it is he who killed the Peuhl!"

38. NGURANGURANE, THE CROCODILE'S SON (*Fan*)

There was once upon a time, and it was a long time ago, a very long time ago, a very great medicine-man named Ngurangurane, the son of the Crocodile.

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And this is how he was born, that is the first thing; what he did and how he died, that is the second thing. To tell all that he did is impossible, and besides, who would remember it?

This is how he was born; that is the first thing.

At that time the Fan lived on the bank of a big river, big, so big that one could not see the other shore; they fished on the bank. But they never went on the river; they had not yet learned how to hollow canoes. It was Ngurangurane who taught them that. Ngurangurane taught this art to the men of his family, and his family were men; they were Fan.

In the river lived a great big crocodile, the chief crocodile. His head was longer than this hut, his eyes bigger than a whole kid; his teeth cut a man in two like I cut a banana—criss! He was covered with great big scales; a man might strike them with his javelin, toc! toc! but *phut!* the javelin bounced back. He was a terrible beast!

Now one day he came to Ngurangurane's village; but Ngurangurane was not yet born. And he who ruled over the Fans was a big chief and he had a great many men. He ruled over the Fans and others too. Ngan Esa came one day to the Fan village and he called the chief: "Chief, come here!"

The chief ran at once. And the crocodile chief said to the man chief: "Now, listen!"

And the man chief replied: "Eras!" that is to say, "I am all ears!"

"What you must do from today forth, is this. Every day I am hungry, and I find that the flesh of man suits me better than fish. Every day you must take a slave, and bring him to me on the river bank; a man one day and a woman the next, and at each new moon a young girl painted with *baza* and glistening with fat. Thus shall you do. If you dare to disobey

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me I will eat up your whole village. There, that is all! Hold your tongue!"

And the crocodile chief, without another word, returned to the river. And in the village they began the funeral lamentations, and everyone said: "I am dead." They all said it, the chief, the men and the women. The next morning, when the sun rose, the crocodile chief was on the river bank. *Wah! Wah!* His jaws were huge, longer than this hut, his eyes as big as a whole kid. The crocodiles one sees nowadays are no longer crocodiles! They hurried to bring the crocodile chief what he wanted, a man one day, a woman the next, and at each new moon a maiden decked with rouge and oil, all glistening with fat. They did as the crocodile chief ordered, and none dared disobey him, for he had his warriors, the other crocodiles, everywhere about.

And the name of this crocodile was Ombure; the waters obeyed Ombure, the forests obeyed Ombure, his people were everywhere; he was lord of the forest but he was above all lord of the water. And every day he ate either a man or a woman, and he was very contented, and very friendly with the Fan. But they had finished by giving him all their slaves, and the chief had used up all his riches in buying more. He had not a coffer left, not a single elephant tusk! He had to supply a man, a Fan man!

And so the chief of the Fan called together all his men in the council house; he talked to them a long, long time, and when he had finished talking the other warriors talked a long time too. When the palaver was finished everyone was of one accord, and with a single heart they decided to leave that place and go away.

The chief then said: "The question of going is decided; we will go far away from here, to the other side of the mountains. When we are a long, long way from the river, on the other side

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of the mountains, Ombure will not be able to catch us and we shall be happy." And it was decided to do no more sowing, but that at the end of the season the whole tribe should leave the banks of the river. And so it was done.

In the beginning of the dry season, when the waters were low and traveling easy, the whole tribe set out. The first day they walked very, very fast, as fast as they could. Each man urged on his wives, and the women, quickening their steps, walked in silence, bowed under their loads of provisions and household goods, for they brought away everything, pots, dishes, pestles, baskets, swords and hoes, everything; each woman had her load, and it was heavy. It was heavy, for with all that they had also dried manioc, and they carried that with them. It was heavy, for she had to carry the children too, the little ones who could not walk, and those who could only walk a little.

And they must make no sound; the men were silent and the women were silent. The children cried, but their mothers said: "Hold your tongues!" The big chief was at their head; he led the march, for it was he who knew the country best; he had often gone hunting, and round his neck he wore a string of gorilla teeth.

He was in fact a great hunter.

On the first day, many of them kept looking over their shoulders, thinking they heard the crocodile, "*Wah! Wah!*" and those who came last felt a chill at their hearts. But they heard nothing. On the second day, the march was the same; they heard nothing.

On the first day, however, the crocodile had come out of the water as he always did, and gone to the spot where they always left the slave for him to eat. He went, "*Wah! Wah!* Nothing. What's this?" And he set out for the village.

"Man chief, I want you!"

Nothing! He heard no sound; he entered the village, and

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all the huts were deserted. He went to the fields, and the fields were abandoned. *"Wah! Wah!"* He ran through all the villages; they were all deserted. He ran through all the fields; they were all abandoned.

Then Ombure fell into a frightful rage, and plunged back into the river to consult his fetich; he sang:

All who command the waters, water spirits,
All you who obey me, I call you,
Come, come to the call of your chief!
Answer without delay, answer at once!
I will send the lightning that splits the sky,
I will send the thunder that destroys all things,
I will send the hurricane that uproots the bananas,
I will send the storm which falls from the sky and sweeps all before it!
And all will answer to the voice of their chief!
All you who obey me, show me the path,
Show me the path they took, those who fled,
Water spirits, reply!

But to his great surprise they did not answer; not a single one answered!

What had happened? This. Before leaving the village, the man chief had offered great sacrifices. He had offered a big sacrifice to the water spirits so that they should keep silence, and they had promised. They promised him: "We will say nothing."

Ombure began his incantation again, louder still.

> You who command the waters, water spirits,
> All you who obey me, I call upon you . . .

And the water spirits, forced to obey, appeared before Ombure.

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"Where are the men? Did they pass by your ways?"
"We have seen nothing; they did not pass by our ways."

And Ombure said: "They have not gone by water; the water spirits cannot disobey me." And he called the forest spirits.

You who command the forests, forest spirits,
All you who obey me, I call upon you!
Come, come to the call of your chief,
Answer without delay, answer at once!
I will send the lightning that splits the sky,
I will send the thunder that destroys all things,
I will send the hurricane that uproots the bananas,
I will send the storm which falls from the sky and sweeps all before it!
All must answer to the voice of their chief,
All you who obey me, show me the path,
Show me the path taken by them that fled!
Forest spirits, reply!

But to his great surprise, of all the forest spirits not a single one answered; they all kept silence.

What had happened? This. Before leaving the village the man chief had made big sacrifices. He had offered a big sacrifice to the forest spirits, asking them to keep silence. And they had promised: "We will say nothing."

Ombure began his incantation again, louder still.

You who command the forests, forest spirits,
All you who obey me, I call upon you . . .

And the forest spirits, forced to obey, appeared before Ombure.

"Where are the men? Have they passed by your way?" And the forest spirits answered: "They passed our way."

And then one after another Ombure called the spirits of the

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day, the spirits of the night, and by their help he learned where the Fan had gone.

They told the news!

And when Ombure had finished his incantation he knew the road that the Fan fugitives had taken. In vain had they disguised their tracks. Ombure knew their path. Who had told him? The Lightning, the Wind, the Tempest had told him.

The Fans went on marching a long, long time. At last they had crossed the mountains, and the big chief consulted his fetich. "Shall we stop here?" And the fetich, which from the first day had obeyed Ombure's orders (only the chief didn't know that) the fetich answered: "No, you must not stop here; it is not a good place."

They crossed the plains, and when these were crossed and they had come again to the big forest, the forest that never ended, the chief consulted his fetich. "Shall we stop here?" And the fetich once more answered, "No, further still."

At last they reached a great plain, in front of an enormous lake which stopped their passage. The chief consulted his fetich. "Shall we stop here?" And the fetich, which obeyed Ombure, answered, "Yes, you must stop here!"

The Fan had marched for many days and for many moons; the little children had become boys, the boys had become adolescents, and the adolescents ripe men. They had marched for many days and many moons. They stopped on the shore of the lake. They built new villages, fields were dug, and everywhere the maize gave forth its new crop. The chief then called his people together to give a name to the village and they called it Akurengan (deliverance from the crocodile).

Now that very same night, towards midnight, a great noise was heard and a voice cried out: "Oh, come! Come here!" And everyone ran out, very frightened. What did they see? (for the moon was very bright). Ombure was there in the

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middle of the village! He was there, in front of the big chief's hut!

What could they do? Where could they fly? Where hide themselves? No one dared to dream of it! And when the big chief came out from his hut to see what was happening, he was the first one caught. With one snap of his teeth Ombure cut him in two! Crick! Crack! "So much for Akurengan!" he said.

And he went back to the lake.

The warriors, trembling, at once chose another chief, the brother of the dead chief, according to the law, and when morning came they took the dead chief's wife and tied her on the shore of the lake as an offering to Ombure. And he came; the woman went. Crick! Crack! he ate her. But that evening he came to the village again and called the chief.

"Chief, I want you!"

And the chief, trembling all over, replied: "I listen!"

"This is what I command you, I, Ombure, and you must do it. Every day you must bring me two men, one man in the morning and one at night, and the day after you must bring me two women, one woman in the morning and one at night. And every new moon, two maidens, well decked out, painted with rouge and glistening with fat. Come on! I am Ombure, king of the forest, I am Ombure, king of the water!"

And so it went on, for two long years. Every morning, every night, Ombure made his meal; two men one day, two women the next, and two maidens on the first of the month. For a long time it went on. To pay Ombure the Fan made war for far around, and everywhere they won, for Ombure the crocodile chief protected them and they became great warriors.

But the years passed, one after another, and for a long time the Fan renewed their plantations. And they were tired of

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Ombure. They had forgotten how he caught them again, in their flight. And they were very tired of Ombure.

And they had forgotten. And the young men said: "We are tired of all this; we will go away." And the young men set out first; the warriors followed, and behind the warriors came the women carrying their loads.

The next morning Ombure came to the edge of the lake as usual to get his daily meal. He looked, he hunted about. Nothing. He went to the village. Nothing. What should he do? He took his fetich and at once called the spirits of the forest.

"This is what Ombure, your chief, commands you! My slaves have fled, they are in your domain, for all other roads are shut to them. Hurricane, break the trees before them! Spirit of the thunder, spirit of the lightning, blind their eyes! Go! It is Ombure who commands you!"

And they went. The paths closed before the Fan, the huge trees fell, darkness covered everything. In despair they had to turn back to the lake, and there on the spot Ombure was waiting for them. But Ombure was old. Instead of two men he ordered:

"Every morning you will bring me two maidens in sacrifice."

And the Fan had to obey, and every day they took two maidens to Ombure; two maidens painted with rouge, glistening and polished with oil. It was their marriage rite.

They wept and lamented, those Fan girls; they wept and lamented. It was a sad betrothal feast!

They wept and lamented at night; in the morning they neither lamented nor wept; they no longer heard their mothers' voices; they were at the bottom of the lake, in the cavern where Ombure lived; there they served him and cooked his food.

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But one day, this is what happened; the young girl who was to be put out that evening on the shore of the lake, the young girl whose turn had come, was Alena-Kiri, the daughter of the chief. She was young and beautiful. And that night she was tied on the shore of the lake with her companion. The companion never came back, but on the morrow, when the day broke, the chief's daughter was still there. Ombure had spared her.

So they called her "Dawn-has-come."

But nine months after, the chief's daughter had a child, a male child. In memory of his birth this boy was called Ngurangurane, the son of the crocodile.

Ngurangurane then was the son of Ombure, the crocodile chief; this is the first story. Ngurangurane was born thus.

This is the second thing; the death of Ombure.

Ngurangurane, the son of Ombure the crocodile and of the chief's daughter, he grew, grew, grew each day; from a child became a boy and from a boy a young man. He was now chief of his people. He was a powerful chief and a wise medicine-man. In his heart were two desires: to avenge the death of the chief, his mother's father, and to deliver his people from the tribute levied on them by the crocodile.

And to that end, this is what he did.

In the forest is found a sacred tree; this you know, and this tree is called the palm. Cut a palm; the sap flows, flows abundantly, and if you shut it in an earthen jar and wait two or three days, you will have *dzan*, the drink that makes glad the heart. That you know already, but our forefathers did not know it. He who taught them was Ngurangurane, and the first to drink dzan was Ombure, the crocodile chief. Who told Ngurangurane about dzan? It was Ngonomane, the fetich stone that his mother gave him.

Now, on the advice of Ngonomane, Ngurangurane did this.

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"Take all the earthen pots you have, and bring them to my hut." This he said to the women; they brought all the earthen pots they had, and they had many, a great many. "All of you go into the forest," he said then, "near the stream where the pottery clay is found, and make some more jars." And they went to the stream where the pottery clay was and made jars, a whole lot of them.

"Go into the forest," he said to the men, "go out and cut down the trees I tell you." And they went all together with axes and knives, and cut the trees that Ngurangurane showed them. These trees were palms. And when all were cut they gathered the sap which flowed plentifully from the axe wounds. The jars were brought (it was the women that did that) the old jars and the new, and when all were there they filled them with dzan, and the women carried them back to the village. Every day Ngurangurane tasted the liquor; the men wanted to do the same, but he forbade them by a severe eki (taboo). One man said: "If Ngurangurane drinks I shall drink!" And he drank, but secretly, and at once his head began to spin round. Ngurangurane came up to him and killed him with a gun. They threw his body away without burial for having disobeyed the injunction and treated the eki with contempt.

Three days after Ngurangurane called together his people, men and women, and said to them: "Now is the moment, take the jars and come with me to the shore of the lake." When they were on the shore of the lake Ngurangurane ordered his men: "Drag the jars along the shore," and they did so. "Bring the clay that I sent you to get," he said to the women, and they did so. And on the shore of the lake, with fresh clay, they built two big pans, carefully beaten down with the feet, carefully smoothed with the hands. Then, in the two pans, they poured all the dzan from the jars, without leaving a drop; Ngurangurane began a big fetich and all the jars were after-

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wards broken and thrown into the lake, the two slaves were tied close by the pans, and everyone went back to the village.

Ngurangurane alone stayed behind, hidden near the pans.

At the usual hour the crocodile came out of the water. He went up to the slaves, who trembled with fear; but first of all, "What is this?" he said when he drew near the pans. "What is this?" He drank a little of the liquor. It seemed to him very good, and he cried out loud: "This is good! From now on I order the Fan to bring me some every day!"

And Ombure the crocodile drank the dzan. He drank it to the last drop, forgetting the slaves. When he had finished he sang:

I have drunk dzan, the drink which makes the heart glad,
I have drunk dzan!
I have drunk dzan, my heart rejoices,
I have drunk dzan!
I am the great chief whom all obey,
I am the great chief, Ombure,
I am Ngan, I am the chief!
Ombure is lord of the waters,
Ombure is lord of the forests!
I am the chief whom all obey,
I am the chief.
I have drunk dzan, the drink which makes the heart glad,
I have drunk dzan!
I have drunk dzan, my heart rejoices,
I have drunk dzan!

Thus he sang, and there on the sand, without thinking any more about the slaves, he went to sleep with a happy heart.

Ngurangurane drew near the sleeping Ombure; with a

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strong rope, helped by the slaves, he tied him to the stake; then wielding his javelin with great strength he struck the sleeping monster; the javelins bounced back from the thick hide without wounding the crocodile, and Ombure, without even waking up, shook himself and said: "What's that? A mosquito bit me!"

Ngurangurane took his ax, a strong ax made of stone; with a powerful blow he struck the sleeping animal; he began to move, and the two slaves fled in terror. Ngurangurane made a powerful fetich: "Thunder," he said, "Thunder, I call upon you! Bring me your darts!"

And the thunder came with a great burst. But when it heard that it was to kill Ombure it cried out: "But he is your father, and my master!" And the thunder fled in terror. But Alena-Kiri came to the aid of her son, and she brought Ngomane, the magic stone. And in the name of Ngomane, Ngurangurane said: "Lightning, I command you to strike."

And the lightning struck, for it could not disobey. In the head, right between the eyes, it struck Ombure, and he lay there, blasted and dead. It was Ngurangurane that killed him, but Ngurangurane only killed him by the help of Ngomane.

And the end of the story is this.

Ngurangurane returned in haste to the village. "All you men of the village," he called, "come, all of you!" And they all came to the shore of the lake. There was Ombure, stretched out dead and enormous.

"It is I who killed the crocodile, Ombure; it is I, Ngurangurane. It is I who have avenged our chief, it is I; it is I, Ngurangurane, who has delivered you."

All rejoiced, and around the dead body they danced the *fanki*, the great funeral dance; they danced the *fanki* to appease the spirit of Ombure.

And that was the end of Ombure.

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39. DAOURA (*Luganda*)

Daoura had children; when he was old and advanced in years he said to them: "I am old; I can no longer govern Buganda, take possession of it; become the masters of your realm."

They answered him:

"Father, we are young, how can we take possession of Buganda when you are not dead? How can we succeed you while you are still alive?"

They refused.

"If you will not take the kingdom," said Daoura, "leave it to me."

He called Seroganga the moukopi and said to him: "Come, I will tell you something." Seroganga came, and Daoura said to him: "Will you take me to your home and hide me?"

"Lord, I will hide you."

"Good," said the king. "Return; when it is dark, come; we will go away and you shall hide me. I am tired of the kingdom; I don't want it any more."

He said to one of his slaves and to three of his wives: "Come, we are going to hide ourselves."

He rose, set out, and went to the moukopi's home. Seroganga led him into the forest, built a house there and closed it.

"My friend," said the king, "never tell anyone that I am in the forest."

"My lord, I will not betray you."

Daoura stayed in the forest. His mother asked the notables: "Where has the king gone?"

They replied: "He has disappeared."

"Go and consult a witch-doctor," said the queen-mother.

They went to a witch-doctor. He said: "Come early tomor-

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row, all the people of Buganda. The best-dressed one is the one who has the king. When you see one better dressed than all the rest, seize him; he will tell you where the king is."

Seroganga said to Daoura: "My lord, I am going to a feast."

"Do not betray me."

"No, lord."

He went to Rousaka. The queen-mother called him.

Seroganga swore, saying: "I saw Daoura last night."

Namasou said to him: "Seroganga!"

He swore again. "I saw Daoura last night."

"How finely you are dressed."

Seroganga said again: "I saw Daoura last night."

"Daoura disappeared a long time ago, yet you saw him last night."

"Lord," said Seroganga, "I did not see him, I only swore."

The queen-mother said to the notables: "Seize him and kill him!"

They took hold of him. Then Seroganga said:

"Do not kill me, lords; let me go, and I will take you into the forest, to Hanyanya, where the king is."

"Let Seroganga go," said the queen-mother, "and he will take you into the forest to the king."

He walked in front of all the notables and chiefs and led them along the road; they came to the forest.

When they saw the king they went down on their knees. Daoura said to Seroganga:

"I told you not to betray me to the people. You have not done so. Who brought them here?"

"Lord," replied Seroganga, "they were about to kill me."

"Since you have betrayed me, let them do so!"

Daoura killed him. Then he left the forest, came back to

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Buganda, resumed his royal state and was saluted by all the notables.

40. THE BACHOENG (*Bechuana*)

Long, long ago, the boys and girls were playing together one evening. They were playing outside the village; they were not inside. While they were playing one of them said:

"Pouloungaouane! Pouloungaouane!" And he bellowed "Ao-o-o-o-o!" just like Pouloungaouane, and set them all running.

There were a great many in front; they ran, and those who were behind followed, and the last of all, the one who had imitated Pouloungaouane, he followed running behind the rest. So they ran, they ran forward but they did not run back.

They came to Chaengane and lived there, and built a city facing the west, at Motlhoare. They became very rich; their leavings rose in enormous piles like mountains.

When the Batlhoare went hunting they came upon them, and asked: "Who are you, and where did you come from?"

They replied: "We are Bachoeng."

"When did you come here?"

"When we were children."

Then the Batlhoare went home to tell the Bachoeng parents, but they were prevented by the sun; they could not see them. In this country there was no water; they were prevented by thirst from going to see them. But it was the Batlhoare who found them because they refreshed themselves with wild melon. As for Bathlaping, they never use wild melon; if they drink its juice they die.

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

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EVOLUTION AND CIVILIZATION

41. THE CONQUEST OF THE DOUNNOU (*Bambara*)

LONG ago it was only the hyenas who had a *dounnou;* among the men it was not known. Men did not as yet know anything of its use.

One day a man named Siramaka heard the sound of a tom-tom, which pleased his ear very much. He wanted to possess for himself the thing that made this noise.

So he set out towards the place from which he had heard the sound of the *dounnou,* and he came to the hyenas' village.

The hyenas caught him and tied him up so that he should not escape. It was decided to offer him in sacrifice to their *dounnou,* the sound of which was so powerful that if it were beaten in Bogandi it would be heard in Samako.

During the night Siramaka managed to untie the ropes that bound his arms, picked up the *dounnou* and fled, taking it with him. Before the hyenas discovered the theft he was already back in his own village and had begun to beat the *dounnou,* the sound of which drew a great crowd about him.

Ever since then men have always had *dounnous,* and their use has become customary among them.

42. THE DISCOVERY OF PALM WINE (*Tshi*)

When the Fantis came from inland to the sea coast, the people who lived in the forest tried to stop them, and the Fantis

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had to break their way through. The scouts who led the way were headed by a famous hunter called Ansah. This man had a dog that went everywhere with him. One day when he was on guard the dog led him to a palm tree, uprooted by an elephant which had pierced a hole in it with his tusks to drink the sap. Ansah saw that the sap ran out from the hole and, afraid to taste it himself, in case it were poisonous, he gave a little to his dog. The next day, seeing that the animal was none the worse, he drank a little himself. He found the drink so pleasant that he went on swallowing it till he fell on the ground dead drunk. And he remained in a stupor during the whole day, to the great alarm of the Fantis and their king, who believed him lost. When he came to his senses he filled a clay jar with the liquor and brought it to the king, telling him of its effects and how he had obtained it. The king, on tasting the palm wine, liked it so much that he too drank till he lost his senses. At this sight his people believed him poisoned, and throwing themselves on the unlucky hunter killed him before he had time to explain. When the king came to, and heard what had happened he was very sad, and ordered those who had killed Ansah to be put to death at once. In memory of this he ordained that palm wine should thereafter be called *ansah*.

43. THE MAIZE PLANTATION (*Yoruba*)

The story runs that Kesi, Kemta and Ake were the first towns founded in the forest of Egba. After that the other towns hastened to lay their foundations. As they were all at peace they thought of naming a king among them. When they consulted the oracle, it indicated a man named Odjoko, who was a friend of the chief of the inhabitants of Kesi. So they made him king. At that time there were not many kinds of

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food in the other villages. They had maize only in Kesi, for that was the only place in which it grew.

King Odjoko had told his people that they must not sell the grain to the other Egbas unless they first soaked it in hot water. A short time after the king of Ake gave his daughter in marriage to king Odjoko.

Through her the other Egbas learned of the trick used against them. One day Alaka asked his daughter to tell him how he could possibly get some good grain to plant in his field. The daughter answered:

"Father, you know very well that it is strictly forbidden here to give away any good grain, and that whoever disobeys will be put to death; but because of the love I bear you, as your child, I will try even if it costs me my life."

Then she began to think how she could best carry out her promise. She had an idea. Two days after she sent word to her father to send her three hens. When they arrived she fed them with a lot of grain; she then sent word to her father by the messenger to kill them, gather the grains that were in their crops and plant them. Her father did so, and was astonished to see the corn sprouting in his field, but he said nothing to anyone until the grain was in ear and ripened.

After Alaka had husked this maize he sent some to all the Egbas to plant. They did so, gathered it, ate it, and were astonished to see the maize sprout in their fields as it did at Kesi. They held a meeting, and in their anger decided to make war on Idjoko, where Odjoko then lived; they destroyed the town and killed many of the inhabitants to revenge themselves for the trick of the grain.

44. THE FOUR YOUNG MEN AND THE WOMAN (*Basuto*)

The story runs that there were once four young men. There was also a woman. This woman lived on the side of a little

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hill. The four young men lived on another hill. The young men busied themselves in hunting wild animals. The woman did not know how to hunt; she sat and did nothing, having nothing to eat. The young men hunted wild beasts and ate their flesh.

One of them said: "How about that being there that looks like us; who does its hunting for it, while it sits there all day long?"

Another said: "No, it is not like us; that being cannot hunt animals, like we do."

The first replied: "It has hands like us, it has feet and a head; why can't it go out and hunt like we do?"

Another said: "I am going over to it, to see what kind of a thing it is."

He found the woman still sitting there, and asked her: "How are you made?" She answered: "I eat nothing; I live on water."

"Really?"

"Yes."

He went back to his companions and said: "That being is not of our kind; it is another kind altogether. It is a being that does not know how to hunt."

They asked him: "How is it made?"

"It has hands like us, feet and a head; otherwise it is not at all like us."

"And does it make fire?"

"No, it lives without fire."

"What does it eat?"

"It drinks water; it eats nothing at all."

The other young men were very much surprised; they went to bed and slept.

The next day they went hunting and returned with the game they had killed. Then one of the young men said: "Comrades,

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I want to give a little meat to that person over there, and see if she will eat it." They agreed. He cut a piece of meat, took some fire, gathered some dry dung and went over to the woman; he made a fire and cooked the meat, then he gave her some, saying: "Take this and eat it." She took the meat and ate it. The young man saw her eat, and was astonished. So he gave her another piece, saying: "Take this and cook it yourself." Then he went back to his companions and said to them: "That person has eaten my meat; she eats like us, but she is not of the same kind as we are, for she does not kill game."

This woman was naked; so were the young men also, but they covered themselves with the skins of animals they had killed, while they were still fresh; they did not know how to tan or preserve them. They carried their arrows stuck in their hair. The next day the young man went again to the woman and took her some meat. The others said: "If you are always going to kill game for that person there you shall not hunt with us any more." When the woman had eaten all the meat she wanted she was thirsty; so she took some clay and made a little jar; she put it in the sun to dry and then she went to draw water in this jar, but it broke. She was surprised; then she drank as usual by stooping down to the water.

She began again to make a jar of clay, then another; she dried them in the sun, gathered some dung and made a fire to bake her jars; when they were done she went to fetch water and saw that this time the water did not spoil them. In one she put some water and meat, and set it over the fire. When the meat was cooked she took it out of the jar and put it on a flat stone, then she ate; but she left a piece in the jar.

The man arrived, bringing her the game he had just killed; she said to him: "Eat a little of this, you will see how good it is." He ate some of her meat, drank some broth, and was very much surprised. Then he returned to his companions and

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said: "Comrades, that person there has shaped some clay; in one of her pots she carries water, in another she cooks meat. Just taste the meat she has cooked; certainly that person is not of the same kind as ourselves!"

They were astonished. One of the others went up to her, looked at her, ate some of her meat, drank some of her broth, and was very much astonished to see the clay pots she had moulded. He returned to his companions and said: "This is a being of a different kind from ourselves." Then the young man who had first taken notice of her stayed with the woman, and every day he brought her the game he had killed; she, in her turn, prepared it for him as well as she could. The three other young men went away, leaving their companion with the woman; thus they both lived together.

45. THE ORIGIN OF THE WAIST-CLOTH (*Peuhl*)

A young man had a sister. One day she asked him to go with her to a pool where she wanted to wash her clothes. She was afraid to go there alone. Their mother said to the young man: "Go with your sister." "Very well," he replied. And he set out with the young girl.

When they reached the pool the brother sat down a little distance away while his sister did her washing. As she had taken off all her clothes he felt a desire to lie with her, and this desire filled him with shame.

They returned home, and the young man fell ill on account of the restraint he had put upon himself in resisting his desire. He was on the point of death.

His father asked the cause of his illness. "I am suffering in my belly," he said. "On the day when I went with my sister to the pool I felt a desire for her, and I am very much ashamed of it."

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"Is that all?" cried the father. "In that case it's nothing much." And he called his daughter. "Your brother," he said to her, "is ill through his desire to lie with you."

The young girl protested the shame she felt at this desire of her brother's.

"If he does not lie with you," said her father, "he will surely die."

"Very well," she answered. "I consent."

They shut the door of the house. The brother possessed his sister, and was cured.

This is why a woman must never let herself be seen naked by a man. The man who sees her will feel a desire to lie with her. It is to avoid this that everyone wears clothing.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

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IMAGINARY SCIENCE

46. WHY CROCODILES DON'T EAT HENS (*Tjort*)

THERE was a certain hen who used to go every day to the bank of the stream to pick up scraps of food. One day a crocodile came up to her and threatened to eat her. So she cried out: "Oh, brother, don't do that!"

The crocodile was so surprised and upset by her cry that he went away, thinking that perhaps he really was her brother. One day he came back to the bank, quite determined to make a meal of the hen. She cried out again: "Oh, brother, don't do that!"

"Curses on the hen!" the crocodile growled, seeing her escape once more. "How could I be her brother? She lives on the earth and I live in the water."

Then the crocodile made up his mind to go and see Nzambe and ask him to settle the question. He set out. Before he had gone very far he met his friend the lizard.

"Mbambe," he said, "I am very worried. Every day a fine fat hen comes down to the river to eat; every time I try to catch her, to take her away and eat her, she upsets me by calling me brother. I can't go on like this any longer and I am going to find Nzambe and have a palaver with him."

"Fool!" said Mbambe. "Idiot! Don't do that; you will only be the loser and show your own ignorance. Don't you know that ducks live in the water and lay eggs, and that turtles do the same? I lay eggs too. The hen does the same, and

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so do you, my stupid friend. So we are all brothers in that sense."

This is why crocodiles don't eat hens.

47. WHY THE RHINOCEROS SCATTERS HIS DUNG (*Ouahehe*)

We are told there was once a fierce war near Tanganyika, on the Fipa hills, between the rhinoceroses and the elephants. The former were vanquished, but their lives were spared on condition that they would not longer come and soil the elephants' paths, but would always scatter their dung.

48. WHY MONKEYS LIVE IN TREES (*Ewé*)

Listen to the story of the wildcat.

Once upon a time the wildcat spent a whole day hunting without catching anything. He was tired. He sat down to take a rest, but the fleas gave him no peace.

He saw a monkey passing by and called him: "Monkey, please come here and catch my fleas for me!"

The monkey agreed, and while he hunted for fleas the wildcat slept. Then the monkey took the wildcat's tail, tied it to a tree, and ran away.

The wildcat woke up; he tried to move, but found that his tail was tied to the tree. He tried and tried to get free, but could not. He lay there, panting.

A tortoise passed by.

"Please untie my tail!" cried the wildcat when he saw him.

"Will you promise not to kill me if I set you free?" the tortoise asked. "No," said the wildcat, "I won't do anything to you."

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The tortoise set him free, and the wildcat went home. He said to all the other animals: "In five days' time, say that I am dead and that you are going to bury me."

On the fifth day the wildcat lay down on his back, pretending to be dead. All the animals came and danced round him. All at once he sprang up and bounded after the monkey. But the monkey jumped up a tree and ran away.

That is why the monkey lives in the trees and never comes down to the ground. He is too much afraid of the wildcat.

49. THE LEOPARD AND THE DOG (*Ounioro*)

One day a leopard left her three little ones in the care of a dog, promising in return to supply so much meat that the dog would not need to gnaw bones. For some time things went very well. But one day the dog yielded to temptation, and a fragment of the bone he was gnawing flew off and killed one of the little ones. He had no trouble in deceiving the mother; he gave her the other two to suckle, turn and turn about, one, two, three. But this same misfortune happened a second time. Then the dog ran away, and went to ask protection from man. The man consented on condition that the dog never desert his house. The dog agreed to this bargain; but a little while after he saw a heap of bones some distance from the house and ran over to them in spite of his promise. The leopard, who had been hunting for him everywhere to avenge the death of her little ones, sprang on him and ate him up. Ever since that time leopards make war on dogs and kill them.

50. THE COCK AND THE ELEPHANT (*Denka*)

One day the cock and the elephant laid a bet to see which of the two could eat the most. The next day at dawn they met

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at the appointed spot. Towards midday the elephant slept, being gorged; when he woke up, after several hours, he was surprised to see the cock still eating. He began to browse again, but before long he once more felt himself gorged, and retired, leaving his opponent pecking away harder than ever in the grass. At sunset the cock perched on the back of the elephant, who was already asleep. The elephant woke, irritated by the pecking which tormented him all the time. He asked the cock, "What are you doing there?" "Nothing," replied the cock. "I am only eating the insects I find on your skin." And the elephant, terrified by such an appetite, ran away.

51. THE ELEPHANT AND THE SHREW-MOUSE (*Sandaw*)

One day the elephant met the shrew-mouse on the road.

"Take care!" cried the shrew-mouse.

"I am the biggest, so it is your business to take care!" the elephant answered.

"Curses on you!" replied the shrew-mouse in a fury. "May the tall grass catch your legs!"

"And may you die crossing the road!" cried the elephant, crushing him under his huge foot.

But both curses have come true. Ever since that day the elephant wounds himself when he runs in tall grass and the shrew-mouse dies whenever it crosses a road.

52. THE QUAIL AND THE CRAB (*Atakpame*)

The quail owned the solid earth, the crab was master of the water.

One day the quail, dying of thirst, went to the crab and said: "Give me some water to drink."

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He gave her some and she drank. Then she told the crab to send his children to her to fetch some food. He sent them, and she warned them to call her "good farmwife" when they came, and then they would get an answer. They went, and called her "Good farmwife, Angbala!"

She asked: "Who calls 'Good farmwife, Angbala'?"

"It is I, the crab's child."

"What do you want?"

"A pass-word to go to Angbala."

"If you go there, tell your father: 'Angbala, burnt arm, cripple! Burnt foot, cripple! Angbala, hump on the back! Is the eye on the left of one's hand?' "

The crab's children ran home and said to their father: "Father, she insulted you."

At daybreak the quail came again to drink water. The crab asked her: "Didn't you insult me yesterday?"

"You lie," she said. "I never insulted you."

After she had drunk the water she told him to send his children to get some food at her house. The children went; the crab hid and told them to call the quail. They called her, and she insulted their father. Then the crabs went home. The next morning the quail came back again and said that she wanted to drink.

"What water do you drink?"

"I drink clear water."

The crab told her to come and drink. She went, but he caught hold of her. The quail's children sang:

"Mother, throw up the water; give it back to him, so we can go home!"

From the other side the crab's children sang:

"Hold her fast, father! Hold her fast, hold her fast!"

The quail's children sang again:

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"Mother, throw up their water! Give it back to them so we can go home!"

"Let go the neck and catch hold of the tail," said the quail. "My tail is my death, my neck is my life."

Then the crab let go her neck and caught hold of her tail feathers, but they came out in his hand.

That is why the quail has no tail feathers. Since that day she never drinks at the river.

53. THE LEGEND OF THE MONKEYS (*Fan*)

Long ago, a very long time ago, the monkeys lived in the men's village and talked like them, but they were not their servants, and this is what happened.

One day the men had made a great feast; they had beaten the tom-tom a whole day and night, had danced as long, and drunk a great deal. Palm wine was plentiful; the chief of the men's village had a hundred jarsful, and even more, set out in the middle of the village, and everyone had drunk; but he, as became a chief, had drunk more than all the rest. So in the morning, when the sun rose, his legs shook like two young palm trees, his eyes looked both ways at once and his whole heart laughed. His wives led him to his house, but he did not want to go there, so he went to the monkeys' village. And then there were great goings-on! They all flocked round him, laughing and gambolling their hardest; one tugged at his waist-cloth and another at his cap; one stuck out his tongue, another his behind, and all laughed as hard as they could. And the old chief got very annoyed; he went and complained to the creator, Nzame, and Nzame ordered the monkey chief to appear before him. "Come now," he said. "Why did your people insult your father?"

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And the monkey chief did not know what to answer.

"From this day henceforth you shall be the servants of men, you and your children, and you shall be punished by them. Go, I give you to them." And they went. But the monkey chief, when the old chief said to him, "Now come along and work!" he replied: "For my part, no!" For he was afraid of being beaten, and he was right.

This is what the old chief did to revenge himself on the monkeys, after he had gone back to his village and had a little sleep. At the next feast he again had a number of jars of palm-wine set out in the village, but inside he put an infusion of the herb that sends one to sleep, and after warning his own people only to drink from those jars on which he had placed a sign, he invited the monkeys to come and drink too. The monkeys could not refuse such an honour; they came and drank, but as soon as they had drunk they all fell asleep! Ah, but that was another story now! The old chief had them all tied together, males, females, little ones and all. And then the whip came into play. Hip! Hop! How the monkeys woke up, and how they began to find their legs again!

When all was over the monkeys had to look for their hair on the ground! And then the old chief had them taken again, one by one, and to teach them not to make fun of him another time they were branded with a red-hot iron and put to hard labour. In the beginning the monkeys obeyed; they had to! But one day, all tired out, they came and complained to the old chief.

"Aha!" he said. And he had them taken by his warriors and whipped again, after which he had all their tongues cut out. "Now," he said, "there won't be any more complaints, so get to work!" And the monkeys could only go *"Bvou! Bvou!"*

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But two days after there were no monkeys left in the monkey village! They had all run away into the forest.

Since that day the monkeys' tongues have grown again, but for fear of being caught again monkeys never talk and they never work!

54. THE HUSBANDMAN (*Gourmanti*)

A husbandman had a lougan in which the millet was already ripe. Every day two little birds came and ate the seed.

So he made little snares of horsehair with running nooses and fastened them to the ears of millet. One of the little birds —the male bird—was caught.

The man pulled out the feathers from the tips of his wings so that he couldn't fly, then gave him to his children, telling them to cut his throat.

The children took a knife. But before they could do as their father told them the female of the prisoner came and fluttered above their heads, crying: "Why do you cut my husband's throat?"

The children did not answer. The male bird himself cried: "My dear, let them do as they like!"

They began to pluck the bird. The female came again and asked them: "Why do you pluck my husband?" "Let them do as they like!" said the male bird once more.

They began to singe him. "Why do you singe him?" asked the female.

"My dear, let them do as they like!"

When they cut him up, when they put him to cook, when they ate him, each time the female asked why they did this. And each time the male bird told her to let them do as they liked, and resigned himself.

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When the little bird had been eaten up all the children turned into little birds of that same kind. Those are the little birds we still see today. Before that, there were on earth only the two little birds whose story I have told you.

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

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WONDER TALES

55. AMAAVOUKOUTOU (*Zulu*)

It happened in the beginning, at the first appearance of the source of life, that some rock pigeons came to a house. There they found a woman sitting outside. They entered, scattering the ashes in the house. She wept. She was a married woman. She said: "They came to mock me; they saw I have no children. They have scattered the ashes."

Then six pigeons came. One of them said: "Voukoutou." The other asked: "Why do you say 'Voukoutou'?" The first one replied: "Voukoutou." The other said again: "Why do you say 'Voukoutou'?"

All this happened while the woman was there.

Then the first pigeon said: "Take a thorn and scratch yourself." The second one said again: "Voukoutou." "Take a thorn and scratch yourself. Draw a clot of blood, put it in a pot. Close the pot at the bottom and set it aside for eight months. Close it at the bottom, and on the eighth month," said the pigeon, "open it."

The woman opened the pot and found a child. Inside the pot was the clot of blood with a child beside it.

The pigeon said to the woman: "Now take it, put it in a sack and feed it." Another came and said: "Wrap it in blankets and put it behind the house; lay it down so the other women will not see it; give it plenty of food so it will begin to grow at once."

And the infant grew at once.

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The husband came home in the evening. The wife lit a big fire. The husband knew nothing of the child; it was entirely the child of the clot. The woman went to fetch it from behind the house; she passed in front with it, sat down and put it before her. She fetched the child's food, set it before the child and said: "Eat a little, my child; here is your food."

The husband was surprised, and asked: "Where did you get this child? Whose child is it?"

The woman answered: "It is my child, the child of a clot of my blood, the child of the pigeons who taught me wisdom. They told me to scratch myself and cut myself, to take a clot of blood, put it into a pot, and it would turn into a child."

Then the husband was very pleased; he thanked her and said: "Today I am happy and contented! You have a child; it is a good thing."

56. NOUAHOUNGOUKOURI (*Ronga*)

A man named Nouahoungoukouri took a wife; but he did not build a hut with the other men. He took her to his home, some distance away. Now he was a man-eater.

One fine day he killed her. He ate part of her flesh and put the leg aside; then he set out on a journey, saying: "I am going to visit my wife's parents." While he was on his way a bird began to sing:

Toto-hi! Toto-hi! Alas, my mother!
Nouahoungoukouri has bewitched the sky . . .
You saw him, sky! You saw him, birds!
He killed his wife and cut her flesh in pieces, O sky!
He said that it was eland flesh!
You saw him, sky! You saw him, birds!

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When Nouahoungoukouri heard this he chased the bird, caught it and killed it. But the bird came to life again. The man continued on his way; the bird went with him, singing, singing all the time, up to the moment that he reached his wife's village.

When he arrived the people said to one another: "Come, today we will feast on meat!" They took him into the hut, and everyone sat down. The bird perched on the tuft of straw above the hut and began to sing again:

Toto-hi! Toto-hi! Alas, my mother!
Nouahoungoukouri has bewitched the sky . . .
He killed his wife and cut her flesh in pieces, O sky!
He said that it was eland flesh!
You saw him, sky! You saw him, birds!

The parents-in-law said to each other: "Listen! Hark what one hears outside there!" Nouahoungoukouri felt no shame; he went out, chased the bird and killed it again. But the bird came back to life a second time and began to sing.

Then his father- and mother-in-law began to think. They said: "Our daughter is no longer here. She must have been killed by Nouahoungoukouri!" They shut him in the hut, but he got out all the same, ran away and left them behind. They looked for him but they never found him again.

That is the end.

57. LONGOLOKA, THE JEALOUS FATHER(*Ronga*)

Oh, well! Yes. It happened that Longoloka married a wife. She became pregnant. Now Longoloka used to wash himself every day and look at himself in the mirror; he asked his subjects who were seated there: "Who is the handsomer,

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I, or the child who is still in his mother's womb?" His subjects answered him: "You, our chief, are ugly. You cannot compare with the child who is in his mother's womb; he is very handsome, for he has a star on his forehead!" He replied: "Very well." And he was silent.

The wife gave birth to a boy. Longoloka washed himself, looked at himself in the mirror, and asked his subjects: "Which is the handsomer, I or this child?"

They replied: "The child, for he has a star on his forehead."

Longoloka was silent, and waited till the child should grow up.

One fine day he said to his wife: "Get some beer ready for me; I want to go out hunting." His wife prepared him some beer. Longoloka left, calling all his people to go hunting with him. While they were on their way Longoloka called his son. He gave him a calabash of beer to carry. His mother put fine clothes on him and gave him some snuff, for the child liked taking snuff.

When they reached the jungle Longoloka said to his servants: "I have no intention of hunting wild animals; I mean to hunt my son, for he is more beautiful than I, his father." Then the people seized the child and killed him.

They returned to the house. When they arrived the young boy's mother asked her husband: "What has become of the child?" Longoloka replied: "He has gone to stay with his uncles." The mother waited till sunset; the child did not come back. The next morning she went to fetch him at his uncles' house. They said: "He is not here." So she returned home.

Longoloka's brother said to his sister-in-law: "They have killed your son. But don't go and tell my brother that I have told you, or he may kill me too." The woman, however, knew how to keep things to herself, in her own heart.

Now, another time she became pregnant again. Longoloka

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began again to wash himself and look in the mirror, and to ask the people: "Which is the handsomer, I, or the child in his mother's womb?" They answered him: "The child." Longoloka kept silence. Every day he washed himself and looked in the mirror, and asked his servants: "Which is the handsomer, I, or the child in his mother's womb?" His subjects said: "The child."

The woman gave birth to a boy. Longoloka again asked his servants, saying: "Who is the handsomer, I or my son?" They said to him: "Your son." He was silent, and waited till the baby should grow up.

On a certain day he said to his wife: "Get some beer ready for me; I want to go out hunting." And his wife prepared some, but at the same time she said to her son: "My child, they will kill you in the hunt! And the one who kills you will be your father." The child asked his mother: "Mother, have you already given birth to a child whom they killed?" His mother answered: "Yes! Once before I gave birth to your elder brother, and your father killed him." The child said: "Never mind! The important thing is that it is our father who kills us, and not another."

Longoloka called his people together for a hunting party. They set out. Longoloka gave his son a calabash of beer to carry. On their way the boy lagged behind with his father's brother; all the others passed ahead. Then his father's brother said to him: "Fly! Run! Your father wants to kill you; go far away and never come back."

The child fled; he went, leaving the calabash of beer with his uncle. The uncle, left alone, took the gourd and went to rejoin the hunters. When he arrived Longoloka asked him: "Where did my son stay?" He replied: "I don't know." Longoloka said: "What is that calabash? Where did you pick it up?" He said: "Oh, I just carried it for him; perhaps he is

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coming. I don't know where he is." They sent men to search all along the road. They could not find the boy and returned, saying: "My lord, we have not seen him!" They went back to the house. On their return Longoloka's brother said to the child's mother: "Don't worry about your son; he lives. I told him to run away." The mother said: "That is good."

Now when the young man went away, he stopped in a certain place and sat down to take the thorns out of his flesh. The sun was about to set. When he had finished picking out the thorns he set out again, and saw a hut with no one in it. He approached this hut, and sat down in the village square. And all at once the being who was in the hut called him by name. He answered: "Yes, father?" The young boy rose and entered the hut. He sat down, but saw no one. Then this hidden being began to ask him questions.

"Did you run away from the place you come from?"

"Yes, father, I ran away."

"Is it true that your father tried to kill you?"

"Yes, father, he wanted to kill me."

"And so you were saved by your uncle?"

"Yes, father, it was he who saved me."

Then this being added: "My boy, you have a good heart, for you had the courage to come to this house, and to enter where no one else enters." He replied: "Oh, father, my heart is no better than anyone else's." The being said: "I say it is good, because you had the courage to enter and sit down in this house, and to talk with me although you could not see me." He said: "Go outside." The child went out. He brought him food and said again: "My boy!" "Father!" replied the child.

"Take some food."

When he had finished eating the voice said: "Go." He went out. While he was outside the being prepared blankets

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and called him. The child answered: "Yes, father." He entered the hut again and slept, for the sun had set.

In the morning the young boy hastened to go out. When the sun was warm the being called him, and wanted to send him on an errand.

"Go," he said, "into the country, and there join the shepherds and the goats; when you are there take a goat and bring it here."

He went, took a goat and brought it back, and when he reached the village left it in the square. Seeing that he had returned, the being called him to come and eat. He answered: "Yes, father," and he went to eat.

When he had eaten he said: "Father, I have finished." "Very well, my son," said the other. "Go out." And when the young man had gone out the being put all the utensils back in place. He called him again. "Yes, father," replied the boy, who went into the hut close to him and sat down. The being then asked him why his father wanted to kill him. "He wanted to kill me because they say I am handsomer than he."

The next morning the being gave this order. "Go to the village and fetch an ox which belongs to me. You will find some people in the village; say to them: 'He sent me to fetch an ox.'" The young man set out, arrived, and spoke as he had been told to. They took an ox, he returned leading it and tied it in the square. In the evening the invisible person called him to eat. He answered: "Yes father," and he entered and ate. When he had finished eating he said: "Father, I have eaten." "Very well, my boy; go out," said the other, who then took the utensils, put them back in place, prepared the bed, and called him. The child came and slept.

The next day the young man went out. The being called him. He answered: "Yes, father." Then he gave him this order: "Go to the village where you went yesterday and there

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take two young girls. When you arrive, tell the people of the village to gather a number of girls together, and you will choose according to your taste."

Reaching the village, he carried out the order given him. They did as he commanded; they brought him many young girls. He chose two, and returned with them. When he reached the hut he sat down with them outside. The other called him, saying: "My boy!" "Yes, father." "You have returned?" "Yes."

Now one of these maidens was frightened, and said: "I am not used to living with an invisible being!" The other had the courage to remain. The being called the young girls to eat. When they had finished the boy said: "Father, we have eaten." "Good; go outside." The timid young girl argued with her sister, saying: "I don't want to stay." The invisible person heard, and said to the young boy. "Take her home again, and bring another one." He accompanied the girl home, took another and returned with her. The master of the hut gave him some blankets and said: "Give them to your wives." He stayed there, and the being did not send him anywhere again.

At last he gave the young man a choice. He said: "Choose which you would like best; would you like me to give you an army to go and kill your father and all the inhabitants of the country, sparing only your uncle and your mother?" He replied: "I would like to go and kill all the people, and my father too, and spare only my mother and my uncle who saved me." The invisible being procured him an army; he set out, and killed all the people, including his father. There were left only his mother and the uncle who had saved him. He returned with them. When he came back with them the master of the hut gave him a village in which to live with his uncle and his mother. As for the young man, he stayed in the village of this being.

That is the end.

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58. SIKOULOUME (*Ronga*)

Now it happened that Macinga went to marry some wives; all had children, but the chief one had none, and so the other women made fun of her, and even her husband mocked her and had no consideration for her.

She went away into the country and met a dove; she wept. The dove asked her: "Why are you weeping, mother?" "I weep because I am persecuted; they mock me because I have no children; every day they laugh at me; they say I am not a woman! As if anyone could prevent herself from having children! Now, no one can. So it is not my fault if I have none." The dove said to her: "Do you want to have a child?" "Yes," she replied. "Then return to the house."

The bird gave her some beans, some maize and some peas. He gave her also a little packet of thorns and said to her: "When you get home, cook all this; when it is done turn it out into your round basket, then prick the grains with a thorn and eat them one by one. When you have done, put the pot back at the foot of the hut wall, and you shall see what will happen."

When she got home the woman did as he told her. She saw then that she was pregnant. Now he had also told her that, while she was pregnant, she must say every day: "Child within me, do not speak," as the child must not begin to talk until the right moment was come. And even after he was born she must go on saying this. So every day she said: "Child within me, do not speak." And after he was born she continued to say: "Child that walks, do not speak."

When the child grew big he went with his father to work; he went also with the servant that had been given to him, for they said: "Although he is dumb, we will give him a servant." Now this servant was very devoted.

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One day the young boy followed the people who went to work. While they were digging some birds flew by. Then the father, Macinga, said to his son: "For my part, when I was young, I should have gone after those birds!" They returned to the house, and the next day went to work. Some birds passed by again. Macinga said: "For my part, when I was young, I should have gone after those birds!" They returned to the house, and when they got home said to their mothers: "Prepare us some food for the journey." When it was prepared Sikouloume touched his mother and showed her the provisions and the loaves, and asked her to brew him some beer and bake him some bread. His mother brewed and made him a loaf. Then his father said to him: "What? I suppose you think you are a grown-up boy and can go on a journey!"

Now the boy they had chosen as the young people's leader, Mahoumana, told his brothers to set out. They started, and Sikouloume and his servant followed them. His brothers, annoyed, turned back and struck his calabash of beer, cracking it. He kept on walking, but the beer ran out.

When they arrived they went in among the reeds and killed birds; in the evening they came out and plucked them. But it began to thunder very loudly.

Then Sikouloume spoke, and said to his servant: "We will watch what they are going to do." The servant was overcome with joy when he heard his master speak for the first time. Sikouloume said to him: "Be quiet! Don't bring about my death, for they are sure to ask you: 'Why do you dance with joy?' "

A heavy shower fell. Mahoumana's servants went to take shelter under a tree. Sikouloume said: "Where can they stay, since their chief doesn't even build them a hut?" His servant began to jump and dance with joy. Sikouloume said: "Keep still!" Then the others came over to Sikouloume, for where he

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was it was not raining, and they asked his servant: "Hi, my friend, why are you dancing like that?" Now he had run a thorn into his foot, and so when they questioned him he answered: "What? Why am I dancing? It is because I ran a thorn into my foot; here it is. You would do better to help me get it out!" They drew out the thorn for him.

Then Sikouloume went to his brother Mahoumana and asked him: "Where are these people going to sleep? The birds have been plucked, but I don't see any fire." Then one of the servants cried: "I am Sikouloume's man, Sikouloume the sparrow-killer!" And a second one also said: "I am Sikouloume's man, Sikouloume the sparrow-killer!" All said the same; they quitted the chief with whom they had come and in whom they had trusted.

But Sikouloume said: "I don't need any servants; I have one, that is enough for me." None the less, he could not prevent them from joining him. So then he began to build a hut. He took a reed, threw it, and the reed made a palisade. He took a creeper, threw it, and it became a roof. He took a little pellet of clay, threw it into the hut, and it plastered all the walls. He took a rush, threw it, and it became a number of mats. He took a bit of charcoal and threw it into the hut; there was a fire burning! They entered, warmed themselves, and went on plucking their birds.

Sikouloume said to them: "Cut off the heads of these birds and leave them here." They did so. While they were sleeping Sikouloume took these birds' heads and put them all round the hut.

During the night an ogre brought some food, singing:

Man has a leg! Keep going!
Flesh and bone will soon wear out . . . keep going!
Let's look for it . . . keep going!

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When he came to the hut he ate up the birds' heads, saying: "Pouf! I'm eating a head! . . . Crack! I'm eating a bird!" When he had swallowed them all he said: "Ouf! I can turn round! Ouf! I can turn round, when I have eaten Mahoumana! When I have eaten Sikouloume the sparrow-killer as well I shall grow fat, I shall grow fat right down to my toes!"

When the ogre had gone Sikouloume questioned his servants, asking them: "Who gave you the food you are eating?" They answered: "You did." "Not at all; where should I have found it? It was not I who gave it to you; it is the ogre who feeds you." They refused to believe this, and he told them: "All right; you shall see for yourselves."

That night when Sikouloume saw the ogre coming—he had tied a string to their toes—he pulled the string. They woke up, and heard the ogre singing the same words as the night before. "When I have eaten Mahoumana, and when I have eaten Sikouloume the sparrow-killer as well, I shall grow fat, I shall grow fat right down to my toes!"

Then they began to be frightened, and said: "Let's go home!" He said to them: "Why are you frightened? Don't be afraid. Stay, and finish the work you came here to do." At dawn, they went out again to hunt the birds, and came back. Later, while they were making the feather aigrettes for which they had come, during the night, Sikouloume said to them: "Prepare yourselves for flight, and return home." They then left, very early in the morning.

Now Sikouloume had left his aigrette of feathers at the door of the hut. He had dropped it on purpose, at the moment of leaving. He said to his servants: "I have forgotten my aigrette; which of you will go back with me to fetch it?" They all cried: "We are afraid to go back!" One of them said: "I have an ox; I will give it to you when we get home." Another: "I have a sister; I will give her to you." Another said: "You

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have only to take my wife!" Another: "I have goats; I will give them to you when we get home."

Then he said to them: "Since you refuse to come with me, listen! When you set out, take the road to the left; don't take that to the right. If you take the road to the right you will see that you come to a big village."

They then set out, and when they had gone some little way they took the road to the right and came in sight of a big village. Then they were frightened and said: "It is true what Sikouloume told us . . . let's turn back!" And they turned back until they came again to the spot where they had parted from Sikouloume.

Now, Sikouloume asked his servant: "Are you coming with me, or are you afraid?" His servant replied: "Should I have the face to leave you here, in the jungle, I who at home was always your servant? Since your birth I have served you! Surely I will go with you."

When they arrived Sikouloume found a number of ogres in the hut, for they had been called together there by the one who had given food to the young people. There was among the rest an old ogress, seated against the wall of the hut. The ogres were handing the forgotten aigrette from one to another, saying:

"Toutchi! Toutchi! Give it to me!"

There were young ones who said (in a baby voice):

"Toutchi! Toutchi! Give it to me!"

And others (old ones) saying (in a broken voice):

"Toutchi! Toutchi! Give it to me!"

The old ogress said also:

"Toutchi! Toutchi! Give it to me!"

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Some said: "Don't give it to her." Others: "Give it to her." In the end they gave it to her.

Sikouloume had hidden himself behind the wall. He snatched it from the ogress's hand without her noticing, she was so old, and ran away. Then the others asked the very old one: "Where is the aigrette?"

She said: "It went *zut!*"

They asked her again; she said: "It went *zut!*"

"She pretends it was taken away from her," they said. "Let's run after our little bit of meat!"

Now Sikouloume caught up with his companions and said to them: "Why did you leave the road I told you to follow? What did you find?" They said: "We saw nothing."

The ogres pursued them, singing:

Our meat has run away! Keep going!
Come, we'll catch it up! Keep going!

And in fact they caught up with Sikouloume. He said to them: "Well, put yourselves in a row!" They put themselves in a row. Then he began to sing this song:

Oh, in this country, in this country we don't eat people!

The ogres also sang:

Oh, in this country, in this country we don't eat people!

Some of them however cried: "Are we going to let our little bit of meat go home?" Others replied: "Let him go, since we have learnt this song; that is enough, for now we can always sing it while we are eating."

When the ogres had gone away the young people also went, and came to the big village. The people of the place came to greet them. They did not reply. Then an old woman said to

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them: "Greetings, gentlemen!" They answered her: "Ji-ji!" The others exclaimed: "What? They only reply when an old woman greets them!" They tried again to wish them good-day. They were silent. The village people said to the old woman: "Try again, grandmother!" She said again: "Greetings, gentlemen!" They replied: "Ji-ji!"

When the sun had set they showed them a big hut to sleep in; they refused to enter. They took them to the hut of the old woman. They consented to go in.

In the evening the people all joined in bringing them food. Sikouloume took a little of everything and offered it to his dog, which had accompanied them; he refused to eat it. So then they poured this food out on the ground. The old woman ground them some millet, cooked the dough and gave it to them. Sikouloume took some, offering it to the dog, who ate it. Then they all ate.

When night came the village people said to their daughters: "Go and amuse yourselves with your suitors who have come here." They went there and slept with them in the hut. Then Sikouloume took one of the young girls' blankets and covered himself with it. When the village people wanted to come and kill the young people during the night and looked for Sikouloume to kill him, they killed instead their own daughter, but without knowing it.

The chief of the village however had called his people for the following day to work in the fields. While everyone was at work Sikouloume said to the old woman: "Would you like some cake?"

The old woman said: "Yes." So they took some meal, and mixed it with tobacco, hemp and other drugs, and gave it to her. While she was eating it she said: "Here is some . . ." and gave some to her son. "Here is some more . . ." and she gave it to her grandson. She added: "There they eat and gobble, and

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don't leave me any!" They replied: "But eat some, grandmother!" When she had eaten, she lost her senses.

Then Sikouloume said to his servants: "Shall we take all the cattle and go?" So they gathered together all the herds belonging to the place, and left.

Now, while the village people were working in the fields the chief's servant said: "One would almost say that was a cloud of dust raised by cattle, over there!" The people answered: "That is no dust raised by cattle; that is dust raised by the workers!" He said again: "One would say it is the dust of cattle, over there!" They replied: "But no! The cattle are at the village with the people we are working for." However, as he continued to insist, the chief said to him: "Go and see, then, and there'll be an end of it; you are only worrying us all while we work!" He went in fact to look, and there on the road he met the old woman; he asked her: "Where are you going?" She could not answer him. She picked up a little earth and threw it in the air; her knees were all grazed.

When he reached the village the servant could not see any of the cattle, so he went to tell the people, and they came back.

Then their chief said: "People of Monombela, our little bit of meat has run away! Get the little basket! Get the little knife!"

"The little basket!" "The little knife!" They began to pursue them.

Now this chief, Monombela, made a storm rise up to stop them. Sikouloume said to his servants: "Lie down under the cattle." They began to run away again. When Monombela's people reached the spot they found that Sikouloume and his servants had left. They said: "Ah, it was here that they were!" They began to pursue them again. Sikouloume made a river appear, and crossed over it with his servants and the cattle. When the pursuers arrived they called to the fugitives: "How

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did you get across?" Sikouloume replied: "This way! By means of this rope!" He threw a rope to them; they took hold of it. When he saw that they were in the middle of the current he let go the rope, and they were swept away by the river. A second time he did this. So then they said: "We shall all be dead soon! Let's turn back!" But Monombela cried to Sikouloume: "Unless you want to become an elephant or a buffalo or some other beast, turn yourself into a zebra!" Sikouloume became a zebra and galloped away: *Hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo!*

When they got home Monombela's people found their daughter dead, and ate her.

As for Sikouloume, when he turned into a zebra his servant took hold of his tail and the zebra set off at a gallop and came to the village. The servant said to his mother: "Heat some water, and let it boil." He poured it over the animal, which became a man again.

Then his brothers came and said to their father: "So far as we are concerned, it is really Sikouloume who saved us." The servants said to him: "We told you that we would pay you on our return." But he answered: "Do not give me anything; it is only natural for me to save you; you are my father's children." Sikouloume then took all his cattle and went to live with his maternal uncles.

His father wanted to follow him, but Sikouloume said: "Wasn't it you who told me that you had not begotten a proper son, but only an idiot? I don't want to live with you." However, when they had made their excuses and his father had said: "I did not know that you were a child like the others," Sikouloume consented to live with him.

On their arrival they gave Sikouloume royal sway over the country. His servant also received a bit of the country. His father no longer discussed business; it was discussed by Sikouloume, who would inform his father later what he had decided.

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His brothers went away and were made chiefs of small countries; it was the same with Mahoumana, he of whom it had been said: "He is the chief." He was put at the head of a small country.

That is the end.

59. THE CANNIBAL'S WONDERFUL BIRD (*Xosa*)

Once upon a time some young girls left their home very early to go out and gather red clay. Among them was the daughter of a chief; a very pretty girl. After they had gathered the clay they thought of returning home, but one of their number suggested bathing in a large pond that was nearby. They liked the idea, so they went into the water and there played about for some time. At last they put on their clothes again and started to go home.

But when they had already gone some little distance the chief's daughter said that she had forgotten one of her ornaments, which she had taken off before going in to bathe. She asked her cousin to go back with her to fetch it. The cousin refused. She then asked another of the young girls; then another, but all refused to retrace their steps. So she was obliged to go back alone to the pond while the others went on home.

When she reached the pond a huge and terrible cannibal, who had only one foot, came up, caught hold of her and put her into his sack. She was so frightened that she kept quite still. Then the cannibal took her through various villages, and made her sing for him. He called her his bird. When they came to a village he asked for food, and after it was given to him he said: "Sing, my bird!" But he would never open the sack to let them see what kind of a bird he had.

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When the young girls got home they told the chief that his daughter had reached the age of puberty, and as they had chosen one of their number to take her apart into a hut, the chief believed this story. He killed a large ox, and told the people to eat it. That day the people ate of the fatted ox and made a feast. They were very happy. The boys took some of the meat and went outside the village to eat it.

The cannibal, who did not know that the young girl's father was chief of this particular place, arrived at just this moment. He told the boys that if they would give him something to eat he would make his bird sing for them. They gave him some food, and he said: "Sing, my bird!"

The young girl's brother was among these boys, and he thought that the bird sang just like his sister, but he was afraid to ask the cannibal to show it to him. So he advised him to go into the village, where all the people were, and told him that on this day there was plenty of meat there.

The cannibal went into the village and made his bird sing. The chief wanted very much to see it, but the cannibal refused to open his sack. The chief offered him an ox for this bird, but the cannibal refused the offer. Then the chief made a plan. He asked the cannibal to go and fetch him a little water, and said that he would give him plenty of oxen on his return. The cannibal said that he would go if they would promise not to open the sack while he was away. They promised. They gave him a leaking jar to fetch the water in, so that he would be a long time gone.

As soon as he was out of sight the chief opened the sack and took his daughter out. At first he could not believe that it was she, for he thought that she was observing the seclusion required of young girls who reach the age of puberty, but when he learned that the other girls had deceived him he swore that they should all die, and so they were put to death. Then

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he put some snakes and toads into the sack and closed it up again.

When the cannibal returned he complained of the leaking jar; they gave him plenty of meat to content him. He took up his sack and left. He did not know what had happened while he was away. When he reached his own house he called to his wife: "Hurry up and cook this!"

He sent for the other cannibals to come to the feast, and they all came, expecting to find something good. He made them wait a little until they were very hungry. Then he opened the sack, expecting to take the young girl out, but he found only snakes and toads. The other cannibals were so furious on seeing this that they killed him and feasted off him.

60. SEETETELANE (*Basuto*)

There was once a very poor man named Seetetelane. He had not even one wife. He lived entirely on wild mice. His cloak was made of wild mice skins, and his trousers too. One day when he went out to hunt wild mice he found an ostrich egg and said to himself: "I will eat this egg when the wind comes from over there." He shut it up in his hut.

The next day he went as usual to catch wild mice. When he came back he found some newly baked bread and some freshly prepared *yoala*. This happened for several days in succession. He said: "Seetetelane, have you really no wife? Who but a wife could have baked you this bread and prepared you this *yoala?*"

At last one day a young woman came out from the egg and said to him: "Seetetelane, never call me daughter of an ostrich egg, even when you are drunk with *yoala*."

From that moment this woman became Seetetelane's wife.

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One day she said to him: "Would you like to have some people of your own?" He answered: "Yes, I would like to."

Then his wife went out, took a stick, and began to strike on the spot where the ashes were thrown. The next day on waking up Seetetelane heard a great noise, like a crowd of men. He had now become a chief, and was clad in fine jackal skins. The people came up to him eagerly on all sides, crying: "Hail, our chief! Hail, our chief!"

Everyone thus saluted him with respect. Even the dogs joined the party. Everywhere one heard the bellowing of cattle; Seetetelane was chief of an immense village. Now he disdained his wild mice skins; he wore only jackal furs and at night he slept on fine mats.

One day, when he was so drunk with *yoala* that he could no longer move, he said to his wife: "You daughter of an ostrich egg!"

His wife asked him: "Is it really you, Seetetelane, who calls me daughter of an ostrich egg?"

"Yes, I tell you! You are the daughter of an ostrich egg!"

That evening he lay down warmly covered with the jackal furs and slept soundly. In the middle of the night he woke, and stretching out his hands found that he was lying on the bare ground, covered with his old wild mouse skins which scarcely reached to his knee; he was terribly chilled and numb. He then saw that his wife was no longer there and that his whole village had disappeared. Then he remembered everything, and cried: "Alas, what have I done! Why did I say to my wife: 'You daughter of an ostrich egg?' "

He had again become a very poor man, without wife or child. And thus he lived, with only the flesh of wild mice for his food and their skins to clothe him, until the day of his death.

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61. AT THE END OF THE WORLD (*Haussa*)

The Asbon people brought a horse, the son of Asbon. They wanted to sell it; it was worth a great deal. The sale was difficult, for the owner of the horse had said: "I will not sell my horse for money; I will sell him only for a woman's breasts." People came. They asked for the owner of the horse. They said to him: "How much for your horse?" He said: "I don't want money for my horse; give me only a woman's breasts, and he is sold." They said: "You ask too high a price for your horse; who could buy it!"

A boy came; he asked to see the owner of the horse. He said: "How much money?" The owner of the horse said: "For a woman's breasts, he is yours." The boy said: "Well, I cannot buy your horse." He went away.

There came a companion of this boy. He knew that, whatever he might wish for, his mother would give it to him. He came, he asked for the owner of the horse. He said to him: "How much money for your horse?" The owner said to him: "If you can cut off your mother's breasts and bring them to me, take the horse." The boy said: "All right."

The boy went away. He called his mother and said to her: "Mother, buy me this horse for your breasts." She said: "Very well." She said to him: "Come, bring a knife and cut." The boy went, he brought a knife, he cut off his mother's breasts. He gave them to the owner of the horse; he gave him the horse. The boy returned. He had bought the horse.

After three days he said to his mother: "I am going away; I want to see the end of the world, where the ground ends." His mother said: "Good." And his father and everyone, they said: "Good! Go, and may God bring you back."

The boy said to the horse: "Horse, listen to me; I bought

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you with my mother's breasts. Carry me to the end of the world." The boy made ready; he put on the saddle. He set out. He rode.

One day he met a spider. The spider said to him: "Ho, boy, where are you going?" He said to him: "I am going, I am going to the end of the world." The spider said: "I will follow you." He said: "Follow me."

The spider made a saddle from the leaf of a tree. They rode; they rode till they came to the place where there is no ground. There they saw a woman, they saw her from a long way off, but she did not see them coming. She was doing something which is not decent. She was a witch.

The boy and the spider came there, they saluted her, she replied. She said: "You are well, my children?" They replied: "Yes, very well." She said to them: "Come, let us go to the house." They said: "Good."

They rode then without ground, without tree, only on the wind, only on the water, only in a dim place. They reached the witch's house. It was night. She went to fetch a cock, and killed it. The cock ran, he hid himself in the grass; she looked and looked, she could not find him.

She cooked some food, she brought it to the boy and the spider. She said to them: "Look, here is some food for you; eat it." They said: "Good." The boy said: "I don't want to eat this food." The spider said: "It is nothing; let's eat it." They sat down, they ate this food. The spider had an iron rod. When they had eaten they went to sleep. In the middle of the night the witch took a knife and sharpened it.

The cock crowed. He said: "Take care, she is coming; be ready!" And the boy understood the cock's cry.

The witch said: "Where is that cock? I have looked for it all day and I can't find it." She looked under the bed; she put her hand there and felt, but she found nothing. She sat down.

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Again she took the knife and sharpened it. She said: "Eat, meat! Eat, meat!" Again the cock crowed; he said: "Watch her; she is coming!" The witch-woman heard the cock's words. The cock crowed three times, until dawn.

Then the old woman came to wish them good-morning. She said: "Did you sleep well? Did you sleep well?" She asked them, saying: "You saw me yesterday; I was doing something dirty." The spider said: "I saw you." The witch was ashamed. She went away; she looked for the cock. She said: "If I do not kill that boy and that spider they will carry this news to their own country."

She hunted for the cock, she took it, she killed it, she cooked it. That night she brought it to the spider and the boy. They ate some of it. They went to sleep. The spider said to the boy: "Be careful tonight." The boy said: "Good." The spider took her iron rod and put it beside her. When the boy was asleep she got up, took the rod, and went and sat down near the opening of the door. At night the woman made ready; she wanted to kill the boy and spider and eat them. She sharpened her knife. She said: "Eat, meat! Eat, meat!"

The spider made ready; she said: "Watch her; she is coming!" She took her iron rod and sat near the opening of the door. The witch came very softly. The spider took her iron rod. When the old woman stuck her head into the room the spider crushed her head with the iron rod.

The old woman went back to her hut; she licked the blood all over her body. She waited a little. She said: "Now they are asleep." She sharpened her knife, she came very softly. The spider waited; as soon as she stuck her head inside the room she broke her head with the iron rod.

The old woman went back into her hut; she licked the blood all down her body.

They fought like this three times, she and the spider, all

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night long until dawn. The spider said to her friend: "Look, this woman came tonight and I broke her head."

The boy said: "Really?" She said: "Yes, it is true." He said: "Let's make ready this morning; we will go to our own country." The spider said: "All right."

The woman came to them. She said: "Did you sleep well? Did you sleep well, spider?" The spider said: "Very well." They saluted her; they said: "Today we are going to travel; we are going back to our own country." She said: "All right."

The boy took his razors. He tied them to the tail of his horse; the horse's tail was full of razors. The boy put on his saddle, he made ready, he mounted. The spider, she mounted on the tree leaf that was her saddle. They set out. The woman changed herself into a witch. She wanted to catch the boy. She seized the horse's tail. The razors cut her hand. She stopped, she licked the blood.

Again she came like the wind. She said: "Stop! If I catch you I will eat you in my burning mouth!" The boy and the spider rode. They came to the edge of a lake of boiling water. The boy said to his horse: "Save me from the hot water, it was with my mother's breasts that I bought you!" The horse jumped, and cleared the lake of boiling water. The spider mounted, and fell into the hot water, she and her saddle. The boy turned back quickly and drew her out. The witch came to the hot water. She came, she crossed it, she seized the horse's tail. The razors cut her hand. She let go of the tail and stopped. She licked the blood.

The boy and the spider rode. They came to a fire which flowed like a river. The witch said to them: "Stop there; I will overtake you and eat you!" The boy said to his horse: "Save me from this fire; it was with my mother's breasts that I bought you!" The boy beat the horse with his whip. The

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horse galloped, he jumped, he crossed the fire. He carried the spider with him.

They crossed the lake. The witch came like the wind. She passed the fiery river. She overtook the boy and the spider. She seized the horse's tail again. Again the razors cut her hand. She stopped. She licked the blood.

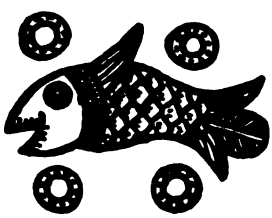
The boy and the spider galloped, they came to a great lake of cold water. The boy said to his horse: "Save me from this cold water," and he beat his horse and he took the spider and they crossed the lake.

The witch said: "I shall get nothing for my pains; I'll go back home. They go too fast. I shall never catch them."

She went back to her village. The boy and the spider crossed one, two, three obstacles, and they came to the place where the ground begins. At last they trod on the earth.

The spider had seen the place that she wanted to see. The boy too. When he reached his town again he went straight to his mother's house. And his mother and his father and his brothers and his sisters saw him, and rejoiced very much. Their son had returned from the end of the world.

Here ends the story of the horse son of Asbon. And of the boy and the spider and the witch too. It is ended.



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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

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ANECDOTES ADVENTURES AND ROMANTIC TALES

62. OBSERVATIONS OF A SON TO HIS FATHER (*Masai*)

A MAN had a son; the son told his father that he had a few observations to make to him. And the child took his father with him into the jungle.

Walking one behind the other, they went to look at an ant-hill where some bees were buzzing. "Come," said the father, "and see the bees that are in this hole." "Father," replied the child, "did I not tell you that I had some observations to make to you? These are not bees but animals which flutter about." And the child, catching sight of a hind, begged his father to come and look at something very much better. Pursuing their way they came to the edge of a pool; the child invited his father to drink, but the father told his son that there was not enough water for two, and that he should drink alone. The child wanted his father to drink, and the father consented. Then the son observed to his father that a man who would not eat, but contented himself with crying, would not be doing his duty.

Going away they met a woman who was trying to carry some branches, but being unable to do so continually let them fall while she gathered up others, which she tied. And the son observed to his father that she was like a woman who, although pregnant, still ran after men. And the child went on, found a

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dead cavy, and called his father to see it. The father said that it was a cavy. "That is all now," said the son.

63. TYARATYONDYORONDYONDYO (*Herero*)

There was once a woman who had an extraordinarily beautiful daughter. Everyone's gaze was fixed upon her, and she was petted by all. So she was very proud. The village in which she lived was a large one, and there were many young girls in it who also were beautiful.

They used to go all together to take the sheep to pasture, and all who saw the young girl said: "Who is that beautiful maiden?" The passersby burned with desire to know her and win her favour.

One day all the young girls in the village were gathered together, and among them was Tyaratyondyorondyondyo, the young beauty. They went together to the shepherds and asked them: "We know very well that we are all beautiful, but who is the most beautiful among us?" They answered: "Certainly you are all beautiful, but Tyaratyondyorondyondyo's beauty surpasses yours as the middle finger the other fingers."

Then they went to the neatherds and said to them: "We know very well that we are all beautiful, but who is the most beautiful among us?" They replied: "Certainly you are all beautiful, but Tyaratyondyorondyondyo is more beautiful than Mbazouwa or Routagaraoudna."

The young girls put the same question again to the berry-gatherers whom they met, and received the same answer.

Tyaratyondyorondyondyo became more and more proud. The other girls made secret signs to one another and said: "Let her be till tomorrow morning."

Tyaratyondyorondyondyo saw that they had some secret

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plot. The next day they met again and went to fetch her. They called her and said: "Come on, let's go and play." She replied: "You must excuse me; I cannot come. I have a headache."

They said: "We beg you, come and play with us; we want to play hide-and-seek!" Her mother, who heard this, said: "Don't you hear what your friends are saying? It won't hurt you to get up!"

So then she went with them. They went down to the river and said: "Let's play at hide-and-seek."

Tyaratyondyorondyondyo had a younger sister, and a friend, but the younger sister was at work and Tyaratyondyorondyondyo had her servant with her. The girls said: "Hide yourself."

So she lay down on the ground; then a young girl came and stood on the pit of her stomach. "You are killing me!" she cried. The other paid no heed. Her friend and the servant cried out: "What is this? Can't you hear! Are you doing it on purpose?" The other girl stood there on her body and pressed so heavily on her heart that she died from it. The servant and her friend buried her body, weeping. The others threatened them, saying: "You take care you don't tell!"

When they went home the people asked after Tyaratyondyorondyondyo. They answered: "She came back long ago; she said she had a headache." "She has not come here," said the people. They searched without finding her, and questioned the servant; she said nothing.

One day they asked some travellers: "Have you seen a body?"

"Yes; down near the river we saw the body of a very beautiful young girl."

They went there; her mother wept all the way till they found the dead girl. She took her up, carried her back weeping to the house, and buried her.

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64. THE WOMAN AND THE HYENA (*Bari*)

A man had two wives; one gentle and thoughtful, the other such a gossip that it often made him angry. Neither scoldings nor blows could cure her, and at last he made up his mind to banish her to a wood among the hyenas. There she built a little hut, in which a hyena cleverly came and installed herself as mistress. The woman tried to protest, but the hyena, not content with eating and drinking all that the woman prepared, even forced her to take care of her little ones.

Now one day when the hyena had ordered the woman to boil some water while she was waiting, the woman had the unlucky idea of taking the little ones and throwing them into the boiling water; she then ran trembling to take refuge with her husband, whom she found sitting peacefully on the threshold of his house, spear in hand. She threw herself at her husband's feet to beg his help and protection, and when the hyena arrived, foaming with rage, the husband stretched it dead on the ground with a blow of his spear. This lesson was not lost on the woman, for from that day she was the joy and contentment of all her relatives.

65. EXCHANGE (*Waissu-Kuma*)

A young man had some honey. He gave it to his grandmother. She ate it. On his return he wanted it back. She had eaten it. She had to give him some corn. He took it away. Some hens came, found it and gathered it in a heap. He said to them: "Say, you there, 'we are great eaters'!"

He gave them the corn. They ate it up. He asked for it back and they gave him an egg in exchange.

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He went on and met some shepherds who were playing ball. He said to them: "Give me your ball; I want to look at it."

They gave it to him. He said to them: "You play badly."

He gave them back the egg, saying: "Hit with my ball; throw away yours."

They hit the egg and it broke.

He said to them: "Give me my egg; I want to go now."

"It is broken."

"Then pay me for it."

They gave him some staves.

He went on, met some elephants, and said to them: "Say, there, 'Aren't we strong'?"

"Yes," they replied.

"Then break these staves here."

The staves were broken.

"Pay me for my staves," he said to them.

"But it was you who challenged our strength."

And they gave him a knife.

He went on and came upon some men skinning an ox; they were using slivers of reed. He said to them: "That is no good; throw those away."

He gave them his knife; they skinned their ox and laid down the knife beside the skin. He hid it, and said to them: "Give me back my knife!"

They looked about near the meat. He said to them: "Pay me for it." They gave him the tail of the ox and he went away.

He came to the edge of a swamp; there he planted the tail and called out for help. Some people came and found him there. He said: "Pull out my ox; he has sunk in the mud."

They pulled and pulled, but only pulled out the tail. He

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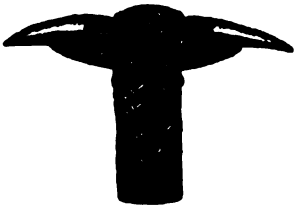
said to them: "You have torn my ox in pieces; you must pay me for it."

They gave him some cattle. There were a hundred people in all; they all paid. He had one hundred oxen and became a small chief.



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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

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MORAL TALES

66. WHY WOMAN IS SUBJECT TO MAN (*Taveta*)

In the beginning God wanted to test the heart of man, and also that of woman. So he took the man aside, gave him a knife and said to him: "Listen. Tonight, when your wife is asleep, you must cut her throat."

And he also took the woman aside, gave her a knife, and said to her: "Listen. Tonight, when your husband is asleep, you must cut his throat."

"Very well."

Then the man went away very sadly, thinking: "Cut my wife's throat? My sister's throat? It is not possible; I can never do it!" And he threw his knife into the stream, intending to say that he had lost it.

And the woman also went away. Then the night came; she took the knife and went to kill the sleeping man, when God appeared. "Miserable being!" he said. "Since you have such an evil heart you shall never touch iron again all your life! Your place shall be in the field and by the hearth. And you," he said to the man, "since you are good, you deserve to be the master and to wield arms."

67. INGRATITUDE (*Haussa*)

A snake having bitten someone, that person's relative searched for the snake to kill it, but the snake sought a hiding-place.

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While running away it came upon a man clearing his field and said to him: "I come to you; hide me." "All right," said the man. "Go to that tree, get inside and hide yourself." "In the tree?" cried the snake. "But I shall not be hidden there!" "Then," said the man, "take refuge in that big ant-hill."

But the snake said: "There again I shall not be hidden!"

"Then," said the man, "where can you go?"

"Open your mouth," said the snake. "I will go inside it and there I shall be well hidden."

"No, no, no!" cried the man, "for in return for the good I do you, you will only render me evil."

"No, no, I will not do you the least harm."

"All right, as you wish," said the man. "Get inside my mouth and hide yourself."

He opened his mouth and the snake went in. Just as it had disappeared those who were hunting for it came up and searched everywhere, but they could not see the snake, and so returned home.

"Well," said the man then, "now you can come out, for they have gone away."

"I? Come out?" replied the snake. "Are you crazy, my good man? What, I must come out, so that for your own pleasure you may go on eating couscous and drinking water! Out of gratitude for the good turn you have done me I will agree not to touch your heart nor your bowels, but I shall certainly eat the couscous that you eat and drink the water that you drink. That will be enough for me." And he added: "No, I shall not come out."

When he heard that the man began to lament, and his belly began to swell. He went home weeping; his wives and daughters gathered round him and asked: "What has happened to you?" He replied: "I have a snake in my belly; I did him good and he returns me evil."

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So then they all began to weep.

While they were weeping a heron who was passing by heard their cries, flew down to them and asked: "Why are you weeping?" The woman said: "We are weeping because our husband has a snake in his belly."

"Is that all?" said the heron. "We can easily cure that. But," he added, "gratitude is a heavy burden, and I can foresee that if I render you a service you will repay me with ingratitude."

"No, no," cried the man, "I shall certainly not be ungrateful!"

"Very well," said the heron. "Then open your mouth." He opened it, and the heron put his claw down.

Now the snake, feeling something moving, thought: "That must be couscous!" And he opened his mouth, but it was the heron's claw that went in. The heron pulled gently, rising in the air; when he was high enough he let the snake drop, and it was killed on the spot.

Then the heron flew down again and said to the man: "Make me a present of two chickens." The man replied: "Here is one already!" And he caught hold of the heron, adding: "Now there is only one more to find."

The heron said: "This is just what I foresaw!" "What is that to me?" replied the man. And he opened his chicken-coop, put the heron inside and shut the door, saying: "I am going out to look for the second chicken, and when I have got you both together I shall cut your throats." And he went out.

Then the woman said: "This is ingratitude that I cannot allow!" She rose, opened the door of the chicken-coop and said to the bird: "Fly away!"

The heron came out of the chicken-coop, but before going he put out the eyes of the woman, and then flew off. Of the

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snake, the man and the heron, which of the three was the most ungrateful? All three alike brought harm to the woman.

That is the end.

68. THE CAYMAN, THE MAN AND THE JACKAL (*Haussa*)

A cayman who came to look for food in a village heard the people saying: "Tomorrow we will go cayman-hunting in the river."

Hearing this he did not want to go back into the water, so finding a rolled-up mat he crept into it, lay down and hid himself.

Next morning the people went on a cayman hunt; then they returned home. After they came back a man left the village to get some wood and dry glass to light a fire and cook his share of the quarry.

He saw the cayman, who said to him: "Keep my secret." The man said to the cayman: "Why are you there?"

The cayman answered: "I came last night to eat, but I heard the people say they were going to hunt caymans in the morning, so I hid myself and did not return to the water. Take me back home to the river."

The man said: "All right." He went away and returned with a sack in which he put the cayman; then, having sewn up the opening, he took it, carried it to his hut and set it down. When evening came he took the sack and went to the water; there he laid it down just on the edge.

But the cayman said: "Put me in the water." He took it and carried it into the water, which came just to his knees.

The cayman said to him: "Carry me further." And the man went into the water up to his belt.

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The cayman said again: "Go a little further still; go in up to your chest." And so the man did.

The cayman said: "Put me down here and take me out of the sack." He took him out of the sack, but as soon as he had taken him out the cayman caught hold of his leg. The man cried: "Ah, what is this!"

The cayman answered: "Yes, and what about it?" "Let me go," said the man. "I will not let you go," said the cayman.

The man was standing there when some wild animals came to drink. They said: "But that is a man standing there in the water!" He said to them: "Yes, I am a man. I did good to a cayman and he returns me evil!" The wild animals said: "You, son of man, it is thus that you treat whoever does you good! You, cayman, hold fast; never let go of what belongs to you."

The man began to weep. The jackal came in his turn to quench his thirst. He saw the man weeping in the water and asked him: "Why are you weeping there in the water?"

He answered: "I did good to a cayman, and he repays me with evil." The jackal said: "Cayman, is that true?" He answered: "Yes."

The jackal said to them: "Come out, both of you. I am a marabout, and I will judge your case."

The cayman replied: "Good. Can anyone disobey the law? No one can."

He let go of the man. They came out, approached the jackal and sat down before him. The jackal said: "Cayman, how did this man act towards you?"

"I would have been killed," said the cayman. "He brought me back to my own element; he did good to me, and in return I do him harm." The jackal said: "Cayman, you are right and this man is wrong."

He said to the man: "How did you bring him here?" The

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man answered: "I put him in this sack to bring him here." The jackal said: "Man, you are lying. How could you have brought him in this sack?"

The cayman said: "He is telling the truth; he is not lying. He really did bring me in the sack." The jackal said: "Get inside, so I can see."

The cayman crawled into the sack, and the jackal said to the man: "Sew the sack up again, so I can see."

When the man had sewn the sack up again the jackal said to him: "How did you carry him?" "On my head," replied the man. "Stand up," said the jackal, "and take him on your head, so I can see."

When the man had put the sack on his head the jackal asked him: "Do you eat the flesh of caymans, where you live?" "We eat it," he replied. "Then," said the jackal, "go home, and eat what belongs to you."

Then the man said to the jackal: "You have just rendered me a service, and I want to reward you. Come with me to the house and I will give you four fowls."

They went off together. When they came to the village the man said: "Jackal, stay here; I will go to the house and bring you back the fowls."

On going home he found his wife ill in bed, suffering in the stomach, and they told him that nothing but a jackal skin could cure her, and that he must make haste and get one. He said: "Don't make any noise; we have a jackal under our very hand! Where are the children and the dogs? Children, take sticks and go out with the dogs; we will kill a jackal and bring it here."

But in the first place the jackal had felt no confidence, so he did not stay in the place where the man had said: "Wait here while I bring you the fowls." He had left him on the west of the village, and the jackal had gone to the east, where, full

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of suspicion, he kept watch on the spot he had quitted, and soon saw it surrounded by dogs and men; at the same time he heard the man saying: "It is here that I left him; surround the place so that he cannot escape; hit him and kill him."

Meanwhile the jackal on the eastern side said: "Ah, I know men very well! So I shall run away. You, son of man, you are unworthy of trust!"

That is the end.

69. THE SPIDER (*Vei*)

He was a spider, and a great famine came on the land, so that there was no rice nor cassava nor bananas nor palm cabbage nor meat nor food. A great famine had come on the land. For a long time the spider and his wife had had children, hundreds of children. There was no more food in the country to give them. The spider pretended to be ill and said to his wife: "I am going to die." "Don't die," she said. "We will work." "No," said the spider, "I am going to die."

And he added: "When I am dead do not put me here, but lay me in a hole, put planks over me and heap earth on top of them."

The wife agreed. The spider died. The wife said to her children, "Dig a hole."

They dug a hole and put the spider in it; they did not leave him there but they put him in the hole and they covered the hole with boards. When night came the spider crept out of the hole and went off far away, into the country. He was still alive; he was not dead. He walked, and found an important woman; a woman-chief. The woman had plenty of rice. There was a lot of rice on her farm; there was a lot in her storehouse and there was a lot of cassava on the farm. The woman was barren; she had no children. The spider asked her:

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"Mother, where are your children?" She answered: "I have none."

"I have a medicine," said the spider, "which I will give you; drink it, and by that means you will become pregnant and have children."

"Give me the medicine," said the woman. "If I become pregnant and have a son I will give you a shed full of rice, two plantations of cassava and a lot of bananas."

In view of the famine the spider agreed. He went to fetch the medicine and returned to the village. The woman had killed a goat and cooked some rice for the spider. She said to him: "Spider, here is some rice for you."

The spider ate, and was well satisfied. Then he put the medicine in a jar, poured some water in and mixed the medicine with it. He said to the woman: "Bring me a strip of cloth."

With this he bound the eyes of the woman and said: "Listen! Drink the medicine. After you have drunk it you will not see me again; I am going far away. In six months you will give birth to a male child and I shall come so that you can give me the rice and all my provisions."

The woman agreed; she took the jar and drank the medicine. The spider jumped into the jar and the woman swallowed him. The spider was in the woman's belly. The woman gave birth to a child; it was the spider. The woman gave him some water to drink, she cooked some excellent rice and gave it to him to eat. He had been inside her; he was the child. The woman did not know this.

There is in the forest an animal called the fallow-deer; he is very cunning. He said: "I am going to see the woman's child; for six months he has eaten the woman's rice."

The fallow-deer came and said: "Mother, I have come to see your child."

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The woman gave it to him. He looked at it and saw that it was the spider. He gave it back to the woman. She took it and put clothes on it. The fallow-deer went to the village, took a switch, came back, took off the child's clothes and whipped it soundly. The child escaped and ran away. The fallow-deer said to the woman: "It was the spider; it was not a child. The spider is a cheat."

The spider went back to his first wife; all his wife's rice had ripened; she had a lot of fowls. She ground some rice and her children killed some cattle. The wife cooked the rice, she cooked the meat, she put the rice in a dish and the meat with the rice.

The spider came one evening and found his wife eating rice. He pushed her hand, passed by, and stopped. The woman put her hand in the rice. The spider again pulled her by the arm and said: "I have been dead a long time; I have come back."

The wife did not answer. Her son said: "Mother, it is my father." "No," she answered. "Your father has been dead a long time."

The spider went back to the other woman and said: "I am the spider."

"The spider has been dead a long time. The spider is a cheat."

That is the end.

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he put some snakes and toads into the sack and closed it up again.

When the cannibal returned he complained of the leaking jar; they gave him plenty of meat to content him. He took up his sack and left. He did not know what had happened while he was away. When he reached his own house he called to his wife: "Hurry up and cook this!"

He sent for the other cannibals to come to the feast, and they all came, expecting to find something good. He made them wait a little until they were very hungry. Then he opened the sack, expecting to take the young girl out, but he found only snakes and toads. The other cannibals were so furious on seeing this that they killed him and feasted off him.

60. SEETETELANE (*Basuto*)

There was once a very poor man named Seetetelane. He had not even one wife. He lived entirely on wild mice. His cloak was made of wild mice skins, and his trousers too. One day when he went out to hunt wild mice he found an ostrich egg and said to himself: "I will eat this egg when the wind comes from over there." He shut it up in his hut.

The next day he went as usual to catch wild mice. When he came back he found some newly baked bread and some freshly prepared *yoala*. This happened for several days in succession. He said: "Seetetelane, have you really no wife? Who but a wife could have baked you this bread and prepared you this *yoala?*"

At last one day a young woman came out from the egg and said to him: "Seetetelane, never call me daughter of an ostrich egg, even when you are drunk with *yoala*."

From that moment this woman became Seetetelane's wife.

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One day she said to him: "Would you like to have some people of your own?" He answered: "Yes, I would like to."

Then his wife went out, took a stick, and began to strike on the spot where the ashes were thrown. The next day on waking up Seetetelane heard a great noise, like a crowd of men. He had now become a chief, and was clad in fine jackal skins. The people came up to him eagerly on all sides, crying: "Hail, our chief! Hail, our chief!"

Everyone thus saluted him with respect. Even the dogs joined the party. Everywhere one heard the bellowing of cattle; Seetetelane was chief of an immense village. Now he disdained his wild mice skins; he wore only jackal furs and at night he slept on fine mats.

One day, when he was so drunk with *yoala* that he could no longer move, he said to his wife: "You daughter of an ostrich egg!"

His wife asked him: "Is it really you, Seetetelane, who calls me daughter of an ostrich egg?"

"Yes, I tell you! You are the daughter of an ostrich egg!"

That evening he lay down warmly covered with the jackal furs and slept soundly. In the middle of the night he woke, and stretching out his hands found that he was lying on the bare ground, covered with his old wild mouse skins which scarcely reached to his knee; he was terribly chilled and numb. He then saw that his wife was no longer there and that his whole village had disappeared. Then he remembered everything, and cried: "Alas, what have I done! Why did I say to my wife: 'You daughter of an ostrich egg?' "

He had again become a very poor man, without wife or child. And thus he lived, with only the flesh of wild mice for his food and their skins to clothe him, until the day of his death.

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61. AT THE END OF THE WORLD (*Haussa*)

The Asbon people brought a horse, the son of Asbon. They wanted to sell it; it was worth a great deal. The sale was difficult, for the owner of the horse had said: "I will not sell my horse for money; I will sell him only for a woman's breasts." People came. They asked for the owner of the horse. They said to him: "How much for your horse?" He said: "I don't want money for my horse; give me only a woman's breasts, and he is sold." They said: "You ask too high a price for your horse; who could buy it!"

A boy came; he asked to see the owner of the horse. He said: "How much money?" The owner of the horse said: "For a woman's breasts, he is yours." The boy said: "Well, I cannot buy your horse." He went away.

There came a companion of this boy. He knew that, whatever he might wish for, his mother would give it to him. He came, he asked for the owner of the horse. He said to him: "How much money for your horse?" The owner said to him: "If you can cut off your mother's breasts and bring them to me, take the horse." The boy said: "All right."

The boy went away. He called his mother and said to her: "Mother, buy me this horse for your breasts." She said: "Very well." She said to him: "Come, bring a knife and cut." The boy went, he brought a knife, he cut off his mother's breasts. He gave them to the owner of the horse; he gave him the horse. The boy returned. He had bought the horse.

After three days he said to his mother: "I am going away; I want to see the end of the world, where the ground ends." His mother said: "Good." And his father and everyone, they said: "Good! Go, and may God bring you back."

The boy said to the horse: "Horse, listen to me; I bought

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you with my mother's breasts. Carry me to the end of the world." The boy made ready; he put on the saddle. He set out. He rode.

One day he met a spider. The spider said to him: "Ho, boy, where are you going?" He said to him: "I am going, I am going to the end of the world." The spider said: "I will follow you." He said: "Follow me."

The spider made a saddle from the leaf of a tree. They rode; they rode till they came to the place where there is no ground. There they saw a woman, they saw her from a long way off, but she did not see them coming. She was doing something which is not decent. She was a witch.

The boy and the spider came there, they saluted her, she replied. She said: "You are well, my children?" They replied: "Yes, very well." She said to them: "Come, let us go to the house." They said: "Good."

They rode then without ground, without tree, only on the wind, only on the water, only in a dim place. They reached the witch's house. It was night. She went to fetch a cock, and killed it. The cock ran, he hid himself in the grass; she looked and looked, she could not find him.

She cooked some food, she brought it to the boy and the spider. She said to them: "Look, here is some food for you; eat it." They said: "Good." The boy said: "I don't want to eat this food." The spider said: "It is nothing; let's eat it." They sat down, they ate this food. The spider had an iron rod. When they had eaten they went to sleep. In the middle of the night the witch took a knife and sharpened it.

The cock crowed. He said: "Take care, she is coming; be ready!" And the boy understood the cock's cry.

The witch said: "Where is that cock? I have looked for it all day and I can't find it." She looked under the bed; she put her hand there and felt, but she found nothing. She sat down.

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Again she took the knife and sharpened it. She said: "Eat, meat! Eat, meat!" Again the cock crowed; he said: "Watch her; she is coming!" The witch-woman heard the cock's words. The cock crowed three times, until dawn.

Then the old woman came to wish them good-morning. She said: "Did you sleep well? Did you sleep well?" She asked them, saying: "You saw me yesterday; I was doing something dirty." The spider said: "I saw you." The witch was ashamed. She went away; she looked for the cock. She said: "If I do not kill that boy and that spider they will carry this news to their own country."

She hunted for the cock, she took it, she killed it, she cooked it. That night she brought it to the spider and the boy. They ate some of it. They went to sleep. The spider said to the boy: "Be careful tonight." The boy said: "Good." The spider took her iron rod and put it beside her. When the boy was asleep she got up, took the rod, and went and sat down near the opening of the door. At night the woman made ready; she wanted to kill the boy and spider and eat them. She sharpened her knife. She said: "Eat, meat! Eat, meat!"

The spider made ready; she said: "Watch her; she is coming!" She took her iron rod and sat near the opening of the door. The witch came very softly. The spider took her iron rod. When the old woman stuck her head into the room the spider crushed her head with the iron rod.

The old woman went back to her hut; she licked the blood all over her body. She waited a little. She said: "Now they are asleep." She sharpened her knife, she came very softly. The spider waited; as soon as she stuck her head inside the room she broke her head with the iron rod.

The old woman went back into her hut; she licked the blood all down her body.

They fought like this three times, she and the spider, all

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night long until dawn. The spider said to her friend: "Look, this woman came tonight and I broke her head."

The boy said: "Really?" She said: "Yes, it is true." He said: "Let's make ready this morning; we will go to our own country." The spider said: "All right."

The woman came to them. She said: "Did you sleep well? Did you sleep well, spider?" The spider said: "Very well." They saluted her; they said: "Today we are going to travel; we are going back to our own country." She said: "All right."

The boy took his razors. He tied them to the tail of his horse; the horse's tail was full of razors. The boy put on his saddle, he made ready, he mounted. The spider, she mounted on the tree leaf that was her saddle. They set out. The woman changed herself into a witch. She wanted to catch the boy. She seized the horse's tail. The razors cut her hand. She stopped, she licked the blood.

Again she came like the wind. She said: "Stop! If I catch you I will eat you in my burning mouth!" The boy and the spider rode. They came to the edge of a lake of boiling water. The boy said to his horse: "Save me from the hot water, it was with my mother's breasts that I bought you!" The horse jumped, and cleared the lake of boiling water. The spider mounted, and fell into the hot water, she and her saddle. The boy turned back quickly and drew her out. The witch came to the hot water. She came, she crossed it, she seized the horse's tail. The razors cut her hand. She let go of the tail and stopped. She licked the blood.

The boy and the spider rode. They came to a fire which flowed like a river. The witch said to them: "Stop there; I will overtake you and eat you!" The boy said to his horse: "Save me from this fire; it was with my mother's breasts that I bought you!" The boy beat the horse with his whip. The

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horse galloped, he jumped, he crossed the fire. He carried the spider with him.

They crossed the lake. The witch came like the wind. She passed the fiery river. She overtook the boy and the spider. She seized the horse's tail again. Again the razors cut her hand. She stopped. She licked the blood.

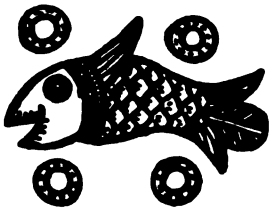
The boy and the spider galloped, they came to a great lake of cold water. The boy said to his horse: "Save me from this cold water," and he beat his horse and he took the spider and they crossed the lake.

The witch said: "I shall get nothing for my pains; I'll go back home. They go too fast. I shall never catch them."

She went back to her village. The boy and the spider crossed one, two, three obstacles, and they came to the place where the ground begins. At last they trod on the earth.

The spider had seen the place that she wanted to see. The boy too. When he reached his town again he went straight to his mother's house. And his mother and his father and his brothers and his sisters saw him, and rejoiced very much. Their son had returned from the end of the world.

Here ends the story of the horse son of Asbon. And of the boy and the spider and the witch too. It is ended.



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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

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ANECDOTES ADVENTURES AND ROMANTIC TALES

62. OBSERVATIONS OF A SON TO HIS FATHER (*Masai*)

A MAN had a son; the son told his father that he had a few observations to make to him. And the child took his father with him into the jungle.

Walking one behind the other, they went to look at an ant-hill where some bees were buzzing. "Come," said the father, "and see the bees that are in this hole." "Father," replied the child, "did I not tell you that I had some observations to make to you? These are not bees but animals which flutter about." And the child, catching sight of a hind, begged his father to come and look at something very much better. Pursuing their way they came to the edge of a pool; the child invited his father to drink, but the father told his son that there was not enough water for two, and that he should drink alone. The child wanted his father to drink, and the father consented. Then the son observed to his father that a man who would not eat, but contented himself with crying, would not be doing his duty.

Going away they met a woman who was trying to carry some branches, but being unable to do so continually let them fall while she gathered up others, which she tied. And the son observed to his father that she was like a woman who, although pregnant, still ran after men. And the child went on, found a

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dead cavy, and called his father to see it. The father said that it was a cavy. "That is all now," said the son.

63. TYARATYONDYORONDYONDYO (*Herero*)

There was once a woman who had an extraordinarily beautiful daughter. Everyone's gaze was fixed upon her, and she was petted by all. So she was very proud. The village in which she lived was a large one, and there were many young girls in it who also were beautiful.

They used to go all together to take the sheep to pasture, and all who saw the young girl said: "Who is that beautiful maiden?" The passersby burned with desire to know her and win her favour.

One day all the young girls in the village were gathered together, and among them was Tyaratyondyorondyondyo, the young beauty. They went together to the shepherds and asked them: "We know very well that we are all beautiful, but who is the most beautiful among us?" They answered: "Certainly you are all beautiful, but Tyaratyondyorondyondyo's beauty surpasses yours as the middle finger the other fingers."

Then they went to the neatherds and said to them: "We know very well that we are all beautiful, but who is the most beautiful among us?" They replied: "Certainly you are all beautiful, but Tyaratyondyorondyondyo is more beautiful than Mbazouwa or Routagaraoudna."

The young girls put the same question again to the berry-gatherers whom they met, and received the same answer.

Tyaratyondyorondyondyo became more and more proud. The other girls made secret signs to one another and said: "Let her be till tomorrow morning."

Tyaratyondyorondyondyo saw that they had some secret

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plot. The next day they met again and went to fetch her. They called her and said: "Come on, let's go and play." She replied: "You must excuse me; I cannot come. I have a headache."

They said: "We beg you, come and play with us; we want to play hide-and-seek!" Her mother, who heard this, said: "Don't you hear what your friends are saying? It won't hurt you to get up!"

So then she went with them. They went down to the river and said: "Let's play at hide-and-seek."

Tyaratyondyorondyondyo had a younger sister, and a friend, but the younger sister was at work and Tyaratyondyorondyondyo had her servant with her. The girls said: "Hide yourself."

So she lay down on the ground; then a young girl came and stood on the pit of her stomach. "You are killing me!" she cried. The other paid no heed. Her friend and the servant cried out: "What is this? Can't you hear! Are you doing it on purpose?" The other girl stood there on her body and pressed so heavily on her heart that she died from it. The servant and her friend buried her body, weeping. The others threatened them, saying: "You take care you don't tell!"

When they went home the people asked after Tyaratyondyorondyondyo. They answered: "She came back long ago; she said she had a headache." "She has not come here," said the people. They searched without finding her, and questioned the servant; she said nothing.

One day they asked some travellers: "Have you seen a body?"

"Yes; down near the river we saw the body of a very beautiful young girl."

They went there; her mother wept all the way till they found the dead girl. She took her up, carried her back weeping to the house, and buried her.

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64. THE WOMAN AND THE HYENA (*Bari*)

A man had two wives; one gentle and thoughtful, the other such a gossip that it often made him angry. Neither scoldings nor blows could cure her, and at last he made up his mind to banish her to a wood among the hyenas. There she built a little hut, in which a hyena cleverly came and installed herself as mistress. The woman tried to protest, but the hyena, not content with eating and drinking all that the woman prepared, even forced her to take care of her little ones.

Now one day when the hyena had ordered the woman to boil some water while she was waiting, the woman had the unlucky idea of taking the little ones and throwing them into the boiling water; she then ran trembling to take refuge with her husband, whom she found sitting peacefully on the threshold of his house, spear in hand. She threw herself at her husband's feet to beg his help and protection, and when the hyena arrived, foaming with rage, the husband stretched it dead on the ground with a blow of his spear. This lesson was not lost on the woman, for from that day she was the joy and contentment of all her relatives.

65. EXCHANGE (*Waissu-Kuma*)

A young man had some honey. He gave it to his grandmother. She ate it. On his return he wanted it back. She had eaten it. She had to give him some corn. He took it away. Some hens came, found it and gathered it in a heap. He said to them: "Say, you there, 'we are great eaters'!"

He gave them the corn. They ate it up. He asked for it back and they gave him an egg in exchange.

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He went on and met some shepherds who were playing ball. He said to them: "Give me your ball; I want to look at it."

They gave it to him. He said to them: "You play badly."

He gave them back the egg, saying: "Hit with my ball; throw away yours."

They hit the egg and it broke.

He said to them: "Give me my egg; I want to go now."

"It is broken."

"Then pay me for it."

They gave him some staves.

He went on, met some elephants, and said to them: "Say, there, 'Aren't we strong'?"

"Yes," they replied.

"Then break these staves here."

The staves were broken.

"Pay me for my staves," he said to them.

"But it was you who challenged our strength."

And they gave him a knife.

He went on and came upon some men skinning an ox; they were using slivers of reed. He said to them: "That is no good; throw those away."

He gave them his knife; they skinned their ox and laid down the knife beside the skin. He hid it, and said to them: "Give me back my knife!"

They looked about near the meat. He said to them: "Pay me for it." They gave him the tail of the ox and he went away.

He came to the edge of a swamp; there he planted the tail and called out for help. Some people came and found him there. He said: "Pull out my ox; he has sunk in the mud."

They pulled and pulled, but only pulled out the tail. He

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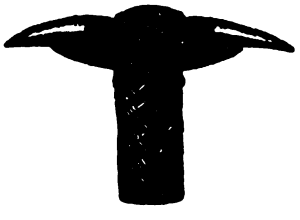
said to them: "You have torn my ox in pieces; you must pay me for it."

They gave him some cattle. There were a hundred people in all; they all paid. He had one hundred oxen and became a small chief.



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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

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MORAL TALES

66. WHY WOMAN IS SUBJECT TO MAN (*Taveta*)

In the beginning God wanted to test the heart of man, and also that of woman. So he took the man aside, gave him a knife and said to him: "Listen. Tonight, when your wife is asleep, you must cut her throat."

And he also took the woman aside, gave her a knife, and said to her: "Listen. Tonight, when your husband is asleep, you must cut his throat."

"Very well."

Then the man went away very sadly, thinking: "Cut my wife's throat? My sister's throat? It is not possible; I can never do it!" And he threw his knife into the stream, intending to say that he had lost it.

And the woman also went away. Then the night came; she took the knife and went to kill the sleeping man, when God appeared. "Miserable being!" he said. "Since you have such an evil heart you shall never touch iron again all your life! Your place shall be in the field and by the hearth. And you," he said to the man, "since you are good, you deserve to be the master and to wield arms."

67. INGRATITUDE (*Haussa*)

A snake having bitten someone, that person's relative searched for the snake to kill it, but the snake sought a hiding-place.

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While running away it came upon a man clearing his field and said to him: "I come to you; hide me." "All right," said the man. "Go to that tree, get inside and hide yourself." "In the tree?" cried the snake. "But I shall not be hidden there!" "Then," said the man, "take refuge in that big ant-hill."

But the snake said: "There again I shall not be hidden!"

"Then," said the man, "where can you go?"

"Open your mouth," said the snake. "I will go inside it and there I shall be well hidden."

"No, no, no!" cried the man, "for in return for the good I do you, you will only render me evil."

"No, no, I will not do you the least harm."

"All right, as you wish," said the man. "Get inside my mouth and hide yourself."

He opened his mouth and the snake went in. Just as it had disappeared those who were hunting for it came up and searched everywhere, but they could not see the snake, and so returned home.

"Well," said the man then, "now you can come out, for they have gone away."

"I? Come out?" replied the snake. "Are you crazy, my good man? What, I must come out, so that for your own pleasure you may go on eating couscous and drinking water! Out of gratitude for the good turn you have done me I will agree not to touch your heart nor your bowels, but I shall certainly eat the couscous that you eat and drink the water that you drink. That will be enough for me." And he added: "No, I shall not come out."

When he heard that the man began to lament, and his belly began to swell. He went home weeping; his wives and daughters gathered round him and asked: "What has happened to you?" He replied: "I have a snake in my belly; I did him good and he returns me evil."

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So then they all began to weep.

While they were weeping a heron who was passing by heard their cries, flew down to them and asked: "Why are you weeping?" The woman said: "We are weeping because our husband has a snake in his belly."

"Is that all?" said the heron. "We can easily cure that. But," he added, "gratitude is a heavy burden, and I can foresee that if I render you a service you will repay me with ingratitude."

"No, no," cried the man, "I shall certainly not be ungrateful!"

"Very well," said the heron. "Then open your mouth." He opened it, and the heron put his claw down.

Now the snake, feeling something moving, thought: "That must be couscous!" And he opened his mouth, but it was the heron's claw that went in. The heron pulled gently, rising in the air; when he was high enough he let the snake drop, and it was killed on the spot.

Then the heron flew down again and said to the man: "Make me a present of two chickens." The man replied: "Here is one already!" And he caught hold of the heron, adding: "Now there is only one more to find."

The heron said: "This is just what I foresaw!" "What is that to me?" replied the man. And he opened his chicken-coop, put the heron inside and shut the door, saying: "I am going out to look for the second chicken, and when I have got you both together I shall cut your throats." And he went out.

Then the woman said: "This is ingratitude that I cannot allow!" She rose, opened the door of the chicken-coop and said to the bird: "Fly away!"

The heron came out of the chicken-coop, but before going he put out the eyes of the woman, and then flew off. Of the

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[illegible] here." [illegible] could you have [illegible]

[illegible] lying. [illegible] The jackal said: "Get [illegible]"

[illegible] the jackal said to [illegible]

[illegible] the jackal said [illegible] replied [illegible] him in your [illegible]

[illegible] the jackal asked [illegible] where you live?" "We [illegible] go home, and [illegible]"

Then the man said to the jackal: "You have just rendered me a service, and I want to reward you. Come with me to the house and I will give you four fowls."

They went off together. When they came to the village the man said: "Jackal, stay here; I will go to the house and bring you back the fowls."

On going home he found his wife ill in bed, suffering in the stomach, and they told him that nothing but a jackal skin could cure her, and that he must make haste and get one. He said: "Don't make any noise; we have a jackal under our very hand! Where are the children and the dogs? Children, take sticks and go out with the dogs; we will kill a jackal and bring it here."

But in the first place the jackal had felt no confidence, so he did not stay in the place where the man had said: "Wait here while I bring you the fowls." He had left him on the west of the village, and the jackal had gone to the east, where, full

of suspicion, he kept watch on the spot he had quitted, and soon saw it surrounded by dogs and men; at the same time he heard the man saying: "It is here that I left him; surround the place so that he cannot escape; hit him and kill him."

Meanwhile the jackal on the eastern side said: "Ah, I know men very well! So I shall run away. You, son of man, you are unworthy of trust!"

That is the end.

69. THE SPIDER (*Vei*)

He was a spider, and a great famine came on the land, so that there was no rice nor cassava nor bananas nor palm cabbage nor meat nor food. A great famine had come on the land. For a long time the spider and his wife had had children, hundreds of children. There was no more food in the country to give them. The spider pretended to be ill and said to his wife: "I am going to die." "Don't die," she said. "We will work." "No," said the spider, "I am going to die."

And he added: "When I am dead do not put me here, but lay me in a hole, put planks over me and heap earth on top of them."

The wife agreed. The spider died. The wife said to her children, "Dig a hole."

They dug a hole and put the spider in it; they did not leave him there but they put him in the hole and they covered the hole with boards. When night came the spider crept out of the hole and went off far away, into the country. He was still alive; he was not dead. He walked, and found an important woman; a woman-chief. The woman had plenty of rice. There was a lot of rice on her farm; there was a lot in her storehouse and there was a lot of cassava on the farm. The woman was barren; she had no children. The spider asked her:

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man answered: "I put him in this sack to bring him here." The jackal said: "Man, you are lying. How could you have brought him in this sack?"

The cayman said: "He is telling the truth; he is not lying. He really did bring me in the sack." The jackal said: "Get inside, so I can see."

The cayman crawled into the sack, and the jackal said to the man: "Sew the sack up again, so I can see."

When the man had sewn the sack up again the jackal said to him: "How did you carry him?" "On my head," replied the man. "Stand up," said the jackal, "and take him on your head, so I can see."

When the man had put the sack on his head the jackal asked him: "Do you eat the flesh of caymans, where you live?" "We eat it," he replied. "Then," said the jackal, "go home, and eat what belongs to you."

Then the man said to the jackal: "You have just rendered me a service, and I want to reward you. Come with me to the house and I will give you four fowls."

They went off together. When they came to the village the man said: "Jackal, stay here; I will go to the house and bring you back the fowls."

On going home he found his wife ill in bed, suffering in the stomach, and they told him that nothing but a jackal skin could cure her, and that he must make haste and get one. He said: "Don't make any noise; we have a jackal under our very hand! Where are the children and the dogs? Children, take sticks and go out with the dogs; we will kill a jackal and bring it here."

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And he added: "When I am dead do not put me away, lay me in a hole, put planks over me and heap earth over them."

The wife agreed. The spider died. The wife said to the children, "Dig a hole."

They dug a hole and put the spider in it: they did not bury him there but they put him in the hole and covered the hole with boards. When night came the spider left the hole and went off far away, into the country. He was not dead. He walked, and found a village and a woman-chief. The woman had plenty of rice, she had a lot of rice on her farm; there was a lot of rice and there was a lot of cassava on the farm. The woman was rich, she had no children. The spider said to

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"Mother, where are your children?" She answered: "I have none."

"I have a medicine," said the spider, "which I will give you; drink it, and by that means you will become pregnant and have children."

"Give me the medicine," said the woman. "If I become pregnant and have a son I will give you a shed full of rice, two plantations of cassava and a lot of bananas."

In view of the famine the spider agreed. He went to fetch the medicine and returned to the village. The woman had killed a goat and cooked some rice for the spider. She said to him: "Spider, here is some rice for you."

The spider ate, and was well satisfied. Then he put the medicine in a jar, poured some water in and mixed the medicine with it. He said to the woman: "Bring me a strip of cloth."

With this he bound the eyes of the woman and said: "Listen! Drink the medicine. After you have drunk it you will not see me again; I am going far away. In six months you will give birth to a male child and I shall come so that you can give me the rice and all my provisions."

The woman agreed; she took the jar and drank the medicine. The spider jumped into the jar and the woman swallowed him. The spider was in the woman's belly. The woman gave birth to a child; it was the spider. The woman gave him some water to drink, she cooked some excellent rice and gave it to him to eat. He had been inside her; he was the child. The woman did not know this.

There is in the forest an animal called the fallow-deer; he is very cunning. He said: "I am going to see the woman's child; for six months he has eaten the woman's rice."

The fallow-deer came and said: "Mother, I have come to see your child."

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The woman gave it to him. He looked at it and saw that it was the spider. He gave it back to the woman. She took it and put clothes on it. The fallow-deer went to the village, took a switch, came back, took off the child's clothes and whipped it soundly. The child escaped and ran away. The fallow-deer said to the woman: "It was the spider; it was not a child. The spider is a cheat."

The spider went back to his first wife; all his wife's rice had ripened; she had a lot of fowls. She ground some rice and her children killed some cattle. The wife cooked the rice, she cooked the meat, she put the rice in a dish and the meat with the rice.

The spider came one evening and found his wife eating rice. He pushed her hand, passed by, and stopped. The woman put her hand in the rice. The spider again pulled her by the arm and said: "I have been dead a long time; I have come back."

The wife did not answer. Her son said: "Mother, it is my father." "No," she answered. "Your father has been dead a long time."

The spider went back to the other woman and said: "I am the spider."

"The spider has been dead a long time. The spider is a cheat."

That is the end.

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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

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LOVE STORIES

70. THE TWO YOUTHS AND THE FOUR MAIDENS
(*Haussa*)

THEY loved one another, and their evenings were spent in pleasure.

One night, while they were talking of a *rezzou* that was trying to surprise their village at daybreak, the young man said: "If this *rezzou* comes tomorrow, according to rumour, I shall kill their chief."

His betrothed replied: "I do not believe you, but if your friend said that I would believe it." The friend said, in his turn: "I shall not mount my horse tomorrow to fight this *rezzou*." "Then," said the other, "lend me your spear!" "Oh, a spear is nothing!" said the friend. "I will give it to you."

While they were sleeping the *rezzou* came; the youth set out with his friend's spear; he overthrew the people and transfixed their chief, who fled with the spear through his body. The warriors arrived, returning to their homes; in honour of the youth they beat the tom-tom, striking their drums and blowing trumpets, and he returned home.

The village people said to the chief: "What are you going to do for this young man, to reward him for his great courage?" The king replied: "I know very well what I shall do." He ordered boubous to be brought, and he placed them on his shoulders right up to his neck. He had a million cowries brought, and made him a present of them. He had a hundred oxen led out, and gave them to him.

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Then his comrade, becoming jealous, asked him: "Where is my spear?"

"Your spear is in the body of the chief, who fled." "Ts, ts!" said the friend. "I want you to give me my spear back!" "I will give you a hundred thousand cowries," said the young man. "What are a hundred thousand cowries to me?" replied the other. "What I want is my spear!" "Well, I will divide my oxen, and give you half." "But I don't want your riches, I am only asking for my spear!"

Then the young man said to his betrothed: "Tomorrow, with the help of God, I will bring his spear back!" The maiden answered: "We will set out together; since someone tries to sully your reputation for the sake of a spear, I want us to go together."

When day broke he had already set out, very early, so that his betrothed should not follow him. But she had seen him, and followed, crying: "Stop! Take me up behind on your saddle so I can go with you, for if you must die I want us to die together!" And thus they both went to the enemies' village.

Quite near the village they came upon a number of young girls bathing in a pool, and these young girls were the daughters of the chief. The eldest of them, who was particularly beloved of her father, said: "Young man, where do you come from?" He answered her: "And you, whose daughter are you?"

"I am the king's daughter."

The young man said: "Do you not know me? It was I who ran your father through the body, and I have come to get back my spear."

She said to him: "Follow me, I will give you your spear."

Then the young man set down the other maiden—the one with whom he had come—and left her outside the village; then

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he followed the chief's daughter and they both walkd till they came to the door of the chief's hut. The courtiers said: "Were does this stranger come from?"

He did not answer them; neither did she speak, but entered the house, where she took a number of spears and said to him: "See if you can find among these the spear with which you pierced my father." He answered: "It is not here."

She took them back and brought others, and so again, three times.

The third time, he saw his spear, and said: "Here it is." He took it. She said then: "Wait until I put these away, and I will come back."

And when she came back she said to him: "I love you; take me with you and we will go away together; but if you take me I will begin to cry out 'Help! Help!' and I will say: 'This is he who ran my father through, and now he has come to carry me off!' Quick! Quick! Mount your horse!"

He took her on the saddle behind him and she began to cry: "Help! Help! This is he who ran my father through! He is carrying me away behind him! He is carrying me away behind him!"

He left the village, and taking up the maiden again with whom he had come, he set her before him.

Then the village people mounted their horses, pursued and overtook them. He drove them back. They came again; he drove them back again. They came once more to catch him on the bank of the river.

So he said to the ferryman: "Quick! Quick! Let me escape! Quick, quick, let me escape!" And the ferryman answered: "I will not take you across unless you give me one of those two maidens."

But the ferryman's daughter killed her father and took the young man and the two girls across; then she said: "I love you,

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and I killed my father to save your life; I love you!" She added: "Let us go; take me with you."

Then the young man went under a big tree and lay down; sleep overtook him and he died.

The maidens began to weep over his body.

A young fairy appeared and said: "Why are you weeping?" They answered her: "See, our husband is dead!" She said to them: "And if he comes back to life, shall he then belong to us, to all four of us together?"

They answered: "We agree that our husband shall belong to all four of us!"

Then she moistened him with her saliva, and he rose up.

"Now, among these four women, who will you choose as chief wife, as your favourite?"

Ever since that day they have been arguing this question, and up to now they have not decided which shall be the favourite.

That is the end.

71. LANSENI AND MARYAMA (*Masai*)

Long, long ago there lived in the village of Birika, in the Foulah country, a rich and powerful chief named Bakari. He owned vast herds, well cultivated fields and numerous slaves; and, still greater evidence of his fortune, he had a seraglio of twenty-one wives. Being very jealous he kept his wives—as did everyone at that time—shut up in a high tata which it was forbidden for any man to enter under pain of death.

Near the tata of Bakari's wives there lived an old woman, Naima, and her son Lanseni. Naima knew all the herbs of the jungle, cured the sick and forecast the future on sand, with kolas. On this account she was held in high esteem and had

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free entry into Bakari's seraglio. Lanseni was a handsome boy, strong and clever, and devoted to hunting.

One day as he passed by the entrance gate of the tata he saw one of Bakari's wives, who was called Maryama, pounding maize. She was very beautiful, with a fine body and regular features. To have greater ease in working she had taken off her waistcloth, and wore only a girdle.

At sight of her Lanseni felt his heart deeply moved. Returning home he told his mother that unless she found, that same day, some means for him to enter the tata he would kill himself. Old Naima, terrified, went at once to Maryama, and after a long talk with her returned, smiling.

She had an enormous chest made by the village blacksmith, hollowed from the trunk of a big silk-cotton tree. In this she put her son, shut it carefully, then, going to Bakari, she said:

"Hail, venerable man! My son has gone on a long journey towards N'dara, and has left me a trunk full of his things. As I am only a poor woman, with no strength, and the box might not be safe in my house while I am out, I beg you to give me permission to put it in your wives' tata. Maryama has promised to store it for me in her hut until my son returns."

Bakari, naturally obliging, readily gave her permission.

That same evening, at the hour when tales are interrupted and the hyena begins to howl in the jungle, Maryama opened the box, and shared with Lanseni the joys of their reckless love.

After nine months Maryama became a mother. Bakari, in honour of the child whom he believed to be his son, and to whom he had given the name of Moriba, ordered great feasts to which he invited the heads of all the families in the village. He sacrificed an ox and three sheep, and for two hours the calabashes were never empty of steaming rice, of beer and palm wine.

Lanseni, however, was all the while in his hiding place,

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sleeping during the day, awake at night, and during three years neither he nor Maryama tired of each other.

One night however their secret was discovered by another wife, Satama, who could not hold her tongue, and soon the gossip reached Bakari's ears. But old Naima, warned in time, succeeded in helping her son to escape. When Bakari, accompanied by two of his notables, came to Maryama to have the box opened, he found in it only boubous, waistcloths and samaras. While all this was going on, Naima announced the return of her son, and asked for the box back again.

Although he had not discovered any evidence, Bakari did not admit himself beaten. After taking the advice of his wise men he called together, to the sound of drum and trumpets, all the able-bodied men of the country. When they arrived, Bakari made them stand in a semi-circle about him. In front he placed his twenty-one wives, each holding her child in her arms. At a given moment he ordered the mothers: "Each of you tell your child to go and kiss his father."

The mothers repeated the command, and twenty babies went straight to Bakari. Only Moriba, after taking several steps, turned back to his mother, weeping. Then the old men of the village said to Bakari: "Truly, that one is no son of yours!" Then Maryama said again to Moriba: "Go, my child, and embrace your father." Moriba started again, and after some moments' hesitation went towards Lanseni, who was concealed in the crowd.

Lanseni, seeing himself unmasked, hesitated no longer; he seized his son, embraced him, and said to Bakari: "Yes, chief of our village, this child is mine. In spite of your orders, in spite of your precautions, I entered your tata, I lived there for three years, and that was my journey to N'dara. I did this because I loved Maryama, and if I could not have approached her I should have killed myself. Now you know everything;

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you are free to punish me; I am no longer afraid of death!"

He said this with such nobility that Bakari was touched, and answered: "No, Lanseni, I will not harm you. This child is yours, keep him. This woman whom you have made your own by such great sacrifice, keep her also. Moreover, I will give you a fresh cow and three sheep, for you are a proud and courageous boy!"

Then turning to his notables he added: "As for us, it is henceforth useless to shut our wives up. Neither the strictest precautions nor the strongest tatas will keep them from deceiving us if they make up their minds to do it."

It is since that day that black women are no longer jealously enclosed in seraglios.

72. POLO AND KHOAHLAKHOUBEDOU (*Basuto*)

There was once a chief who had two wives, one of which always killed the children of the other. At last the latter went to her parents' house to be brought to bed, and there gave birth to a daughter whom she named Polo, because from her birth they clothed her in the skin of a water snake. When Polo grew bigger, they clothed her in another skin, a little larger. Then her mother went back to her husband, leaving her daughter Polo to the care of the grandparents; it was there that Polo grew up and became a young girl; it was there also that she went through the rites of nubility. The chief's other wife also had a daughter, named Khoahlakhoubedou.

One day Masilo came to the father of Khoahlakhoubedou and said to him: "I have come to look for some wives: I want to marry."

The chief ordered all his daughters to present themselves,

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so that Masilo might choose which he preferred. The next day Mapolo went to fetch her daughter; Polo came, followed by her companions, who made only a very small group. When the time came to appear before Masilo Khoahlakhoubedou and her companions refused to walk with Polo and her companions, saying: "We won't walk in company with a snake!"

So the two parties of young girls walked at a little distance one from another.

Masilo stood on a hill to watch them arrive. When the young girls reached a little stream they cried: "Let's go down to the stream and take our clothes off and bathe!" Khoahlakhoubedou and her companions bathed on one side; Polo and her companions bathed on the other side. They left the water and went on their way, watched all the time by Masilo. At last they drew near a brook which ran just at the foot of the hill where Masilo was standing.

Masilo said to himself: "Down there, in the middle of the smallest group of all, is a young girl who looks all black; I wonder what strange garment she is dressed in." The young girls took off their clothes again to bathe. When Polo had taken off her snake-skin Masilo cried: "What a beautiful girl! She shall be my wife; when she takes off her snake-skin one can see how beautiful she is!" When he saw her companions dress her again in her hideous skin he cried: "Alas, how ugly my wife becomes when she puts on that horrible skin!"

The young girls kept on their way, and arrived at Masilo's. They said to them: "Good-morning, fair maidens!" The two groups of young girls sat down, each apart; Khoahlakhoubedou's party on one side and Polo's on the other. Masilo came, and saluted them all; they returned his greeting. Then he came and sat down near Khoahlakhoubedou's companions and said to her: "Khoahlakhoubedou, give me a pinch of snuff!" The maiden took her snuff-box and poured some snuff into his hand;

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Masilo took some and snuffed it. Then he went over to the group of Polo's companions. Khoahlakhoubedou's group cried: "Oh, he is going to the snake's party; let's laugh at him!" They began to laugh. Masilo sat down and said: "Polo, give me a pinch of snuff." She gave him some tobacco and he snuffed it. Khoahlakhoubedou's companions cried: "Ugh! He has taken tobacco from the snake's hand!" But Masilo said to them: "She is a chief's daughter, too, just like Khoahlakhoubedou."

Then he rose and went to his mother; he said to her: "Take a big pot of soup and give it to the snake's party; take a smaller one and give it to Khoahlakhoubedou's." His mother did so. Masilo came out, having tied a small iron spoon to his coat. He sat down near Khoahlakhoubedou, took a little soup in his hands and ate it. Then he rose and went over to Polo's party. Khoahlakhoubedou and her companions cried: "Ugh! He is eating with a snake! Let's laugh at him!" And they laughed.

Then Masilo went back to his mother and said to her: "Take a jar of yoala and carry it to Khoahlakhoubedou." When that had been done he said to her: "Now take a larger one, and carry it to Polo." His mother did so. Then he went to his servants and said: "Take a large fat sheep, kill it and take it to Polo." They did so. Khoahlakhoubedou's companions cried: "Oho! So they are giving the snake a fine fat sheep!" Masilo answered them: "She is a chief's daughter; I am giving her food." Then he said to his servants: "Take a ewe, kill it and give it to Khoahlakhoubedou." It was Khoahlakhoubedou who was the daughter of the chief wife, yet Masilo gave her only a lean ewe; Polo was only Khoahlakhoubedou's servant, yet she was given a fine fat sheep.

When the sun had set Masilo said: "Khoahlakhoubedou and her companions will pass the night in my mother's hut; Polo and her companions will pass the night in mine." He entered

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the hut where Khoahlakhoubedou was and stayed there a brief moment; then he came out and went to Polo and her companions. He said to them: "Take that hideous skin off Polo." They answered: "That is not a skin she is wearing; it is her body. She is like that." He repeated: "I beg you, take it off." For a long time he begged them to do what he wanted. At last they said: "You try and take it off, if you like, but it is useless, because it is the skin in which she came into the world." He continued to beg them; at last they gave in to his wishes and took off the skin in which Polo was clothed. Then he cried: "What a beautiful maiden! She shall be my wife! It is she whom I shall marry." When Polo's companions wanted to dress her in the snake skin again Masilo took it, tore it up and threw it in the fire. He stayed there talking with them all night, until the morning.

Then he came out and went to his mother; he said to her: "Mother, take some mats and lay them on the ground, from your hut to mine." Then he had oxen killed and prepared a great feast. His mother took mats and spread them over the whole space separating her hut from that of her son. Khoahlakhoubedou was very sad to see all this.

The people asked: "Who is going to appear before us?"

Masilo then ordered all his young men to take their shields and put on their ostrich plumes. Then he arranged them in two files, one facing another, in such a way that when they raised their shields above their heads it made a covered pathway stretching from Masilo's hut to his mother's. When all was ready Masilo cried: "Now, Polo, come forth!"

Polo came forth. At the moment when she put her foot outside the hut the sun was darkened; they threw a large necklace of copper on the ground and the sun shone out again. Polo walked in the shade of the shields that the young men held raised above their heads so that the sun should not harm her;

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thus she advanced to the hut of Masilo's mother. Everyone cried out: "Come and see Masilo's wife! How beautiful she is!" Khoahlakhoubedou wept with anger, and never ceased sobbing. Masilo said to her: "Don't weep like that; you shall be my wife also." Until that moment no one had ever seen how beautiful Polo was; Khoahlakhoubedou had never known it. They made a great feast and ate and drank until nightfall.

The next day Masilo chose the cattle with which he was to marry his two wives and had them driven to Rakhoahlakhoubedou. Then he set out with his two wives. He said to his young men: "Don't let the sun harm Polo! Make her a shelter with your shields." The young men lifted their shields above their heads, as they had done the evening before, and Polo walked in the midst of them, protected from the sun's rays.

When this numerous company came in sight of Rakhoahlakhoubedou's village Polo's mother cried: "Alas, my poor snake, they have doubtless killed her! I shall never see her again, my poor snake!" Masilo and his people entered the village and went to the khotla of Rakhoahlakhoubedou; Masilo presented him with the cattle he had brought to marry Polo and Khoahlakhoubedou. It was then only that the village people learned that Mapolo had a child; up till then they had never known of it. They killed oxen and celebrated the marriage; then Masilo returned home with his two wives. Polo became his chief wife and Khoahlakhoubedou was the servant of Polo.

73. MASILO AND THAKANE *(Basuto)*

Masilo wanted to marry his sister Thakane, but she refused him, saying: "I am your sister; how could you marry me?" But however strongly she refused, Masilo always returned to the charge, saying: "In the whole world there is not another girl as beautiful as you are."

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One certain day, at the time of a holiday, as the boys had gone to the fields with the cattle the young girls of the village went out together to get wood. Then Masilo said to his sister: "Come with me; I will show you a place where you will find some splendid wood, worthy of a chief's daughter." And all alone Thakane followed her brother, who had forbidden the other young girls to come with them.

Masilo led his sister to a spot some distance off where there was a deep narrow crevice between two rocks. There he said to his sister: "Do you refuse to marry me, for good?" His sister answered: "Certainly! I will never consent to marry my brother!"

"Do you still dare to say that now? Don't you see that you are alone with me, and that I can kill you if I want?"

Thakane replied: "Even if you kill me I would never consent to marry you."

Then Masilo threw himself upon her and bound her hand and foot; then he said: "Don't you understand that if you continue to refuse there is nothing left for you but to die?"

Thakane replied again: "Even though I have to die this very moment, I will not consent to marry you, you who are my brother!" So then Masilo seized her and flung her to the bottom of the crevice; then he went away, thus leaving his sister to certain death.

At night fall, when the cattle had come back to the village, and they saw that Thakane did not return, they looked for her everywhere; they questioned her companions, but the latter were afraid to say what they knew; they said to one another: "If we were not afraid of Masilo we would tell how Masilo called her and took her into the bushes, forbidding us to follow, and that since then we don't know what has become of her. After Masilo returned to his herd Thakane was no longer with him."

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They searched for Thakane a long time, they went to all the neighbouring villages, but in vain; they even went as far as the one where her grandfather lived, but in vain. No one had seen her anywhere, no one could tell where she had gone.

As for Masilo, he continued to herd his cattle, as though nothing had happened; but every day he said to his companions: "Stay here with the cattle; there is a bird over there that I want to try and catch." And he left them for the rest of the day. He went to the crevice, to the bottom of which he had flung Thakane; he seated himself above near the opening, took a big lump of basalt and struck the rock with it violently, singing:

Thakane, daughter of Madi-a-Khomo, speak,
Speak that I may hear you!

Then Thakane replied to him:

Since I must speak, I will speak, but what can I say?
Masilo, my brother, wanted to marry me, but I refused him.

On hearing which Masilo went away, happy.

As Masilo thus left his cattle every day, his younger brother said: "I would very much like to know what bird that is that does not let itself be caught." One day when Masilo had said: "Stay here with the cattle; there is a bird over there that I want to try and catch," the younger brother escaped without being noticed and followed him secretly. When Masilo reached the crevice in the rocks the little boy hid himself behind a bush. Masilo laid down his shield, seized a big lump af basalt and struck the rock with it violently, singing:

Thakane, daughter of Madi-a-Khomo, speak,
Speak that I may hear you!

Thakane replied to him as usual, but her voice had become so feeble that one could scarcely hear it; nevertheless the

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younger brother was able to understand what she said. He said to himself: "Oh-h! Masilo pretends to hunt birds, but really he has killed my sister." Then he went away without being seen, and returning to his own flock, sat down and wept. When Masilo also came back the other boys said to him: "There is your brother who does nothing but weep; we don't know what is the matter with him." Masilo asked him: "What is the matter, little brother?" "I have a belly-ache." "Really?" "Yes."

Then Masilo told two of his companions to take the little boy home. When he reached the village, still weeping and with red eyes, his mother was seized with sorrow and began to weep also. She asked him, "What is the matter, my child? Why do you cry? I also shed tears unceasingly for the loss of your sister, Thakane." The little one replied: "Call my father." His mother asked him: "Why call him?" The little one said: "I have terrible pains in my insides."

When the father had come, the child said: "Father, mother, let us go into the hut." He entered, still weeping; his parents followed, weeping also. They asked him: "Are you in great pain?" He said: "Father, mother, Thakane has been killed by Masilo." They asked: "How did he kill her? How do you know this?" The little boy said: "Thakane has been killed by Masilo; do not doubt it. I can take you to the spot where she is." In the depths of night the father and mother set out, led by their youngest son.

When they reached the place the child said: "Father, take that big stone, which is too heavy for me to lift alone, and hit the rock violently above the crevice, singing:

Thakane, daughter of Madi-a-Khomo, speak,
Speak that I may hear you!

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The father took the stone and did as he was told; it was so dark that one could see nothing. He heard the voice of his daughter, but so weak, so weak that he could scarcely understand what she said. Then he lay down on the ground, leaned over the edge of the crevice and called: "Thakane! Thakane!" Thakane replied: "Father!"

"How is it that you are there, my poor child?"

"It was Masilo who threw me in."

The father, overcome, asked: "What can we do? How can we get her out?" Search as he would he could find no means of pulling her out; at last he said to his wife: "Are you afraid to stay here alone while I go to the village to get help?" The wife replied: "No, you can go; I am not afraid; on your return you will find me here. Tell the people of our village that the crevice is very deep, and that they must bring leather thongs and some grease."

The husband presently returned with twenty men from his village; he leaned again over the edge of the crevice and called to his daughter: "When we let down the thongs to you can you tie them round your feet and under your armpits?" Thakane answered: "Yes, I can do it, but the crevice is so narrow that I can scarcely use my hands." Then they lowered the thongs of leather; she tied them round her feet and passed them under her armpits; then she said: "Now it is done." Her father said: "When we try to draw you up, don't remain lying down but try to stand." Thakane replied: "I cannot stand up." Then the men said: "Since she cannot stand up we must melt the grease and let it run down the walls of the crevice till they become smooth and slippery." This was done. When her father and the men drew on the thongs to pull her out of the crevice the grease had made the walls smooth and slippery and softened the roughnesses, so that she had not even a scratch, and reached the top unhurt, but very thin. They let her rest

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a moment, then they carried her to her parents' hut, where they made her swallow a lot of melted fat to moisten and distend her throat.

The day after Masilo went as usual to pasture his cattle, without suspecting what had happened. Among the young men who accompanied him was one of those who had helped, the night before, to pull Thakane out from the crevice where Masilo had thrown her; he said to himself: "I must know if it was really Masilo who tried to kill his sister." He went secretly near the crevice and hid himself behind a bush; a moment later he saw Masilo coming. The latter laid down his shield, took the lump of basalt and flung it violently, on the ground, *thud!* singing:

> Thakane, daughter of Madi-a-Khomo, speak,
> Speak that I may hear you!

There was no reply. He said: "Are you sulky, then, today?" Then he struck the rock a second time, more violently than before, singing:

> Thakane, daughter of Madi-a-Khomo, speak,
> Speak that I may hear you!

There was still no reply; no sound was heard. Then Masilo brandished his shield and leapt with joy, crying: "Ah, so you are dead now, you are beginning to rot, you who would not have me!" Then he returned to his herd, very happy, playing gayly on his flute and saying: "Today she is dead!" When he drew near his companions they said to one another: "Masilo is a bad brother; see how happy he is although his sister is dead!"

That day his father had killed a sheep, to make some broth for Thakane. In the evening, when he returned with the cattle, Masilo waited a long time, but no one brought him any food.

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At last he asked: "Where is the sheep's head? Why didn't you bring it to me?" Then he sent word to his father: "Send me the sheep's head to eat." The father replied: "Tell him that I have already eaten it myself." In this way Masilo had to do without meat.

For several days he continued to herd his cattle, without suspecting that Thakane had been found. Everyone was surprised and ashamed at the joy he showed; they said: "How can he be so joyful when his sister Thakane is dead?" Meanwhile the parents continued each day to bathe Thakane with warm water and anoint her with grease. After some time she was at last able to raise herself up by leaning against the walls of the hut; then her muscles, so long contracted, relaxed noisily. Now she could begin also to speak and to tell her parents how Masilo had treated her. For several days they still prepared her tender meat; they killed sheep and arranged the skins for her. At night she went out with her mother to walk.

She very soon became as stout and well again as before. Then her father and mother cut their hair, which during their mourning they had allowed to grow untended; they began again to anoint themselves with oil and resume the appearance of healthy people. The neighbours said: "They have wept; now they are consoled. They are leaving off their mourning." Then the father sent one of his servants to his father-in-law and mother-in-law to tell them: "Make haste and come, for I have prepared a feast; above all my father-in-law must be there." They killed many oxen and prepared an enormous meal.

When they were gathered together for the feast, and had begun to serve food to the guests, Masilo's father said to his relatives: "I have wept for a long time; today I am consoled." Then he ordered some reed mats to be spread on the ground, in the middle of the village. Meantime the crowd were seated on the ground, eating and drinking. Then the father,

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the mother and the grandmother of Thakane called to her: "Now come out of the hut!"

She came out from the hut; scarcely was she outside than the sun was darkened. All the people cried out together: "What! It is Thakane! She is still alive!" There was joy among all. As for Masilo, he fled as quickly as he could and took refuge in a far-off country.

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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

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HUMOROUS TALES

74. THE SLY GIRL *(Bornu)*

THERE was a man who had a beautiful daughter, and he saw that all the boys were in love with her because of her beauty.

Two boys, who were rivals, came one day to call on the young girl, and said to her: "We have come to you."

She asked them: "What do you want of me?" They replied: "We love you, that is why we have come to you."

The young girl rose, went to her father and said: "You see, two boys have come to me!"

The father rose, went out to the boys and asked them: "What do you want, my sons, that you come to me?"

They answered him: "We are rivals, and we have come to see your daughter because we want to marry her."

The father listened to these words and said: "Go home tonight and sleep, and come back tomorrow; you will see which of you will have my daughter in marriage."

The boys obeyed him and went home to sleep. But as soon as it was light next day they rose, returned to the young girl's father and said to him: "Well, here we are, as you told us yesterday; we have come to see you."

The father heard them and said: "Stay here and wait for me; I am going to buy a piece of cloth in the market. When I have brought it you will hear what I have to say."

The young men obeyed the father's words and waited, while he rose, took the money and went to the market. He came to

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the place where they sold cloth, bought a piece, and returned to the young men. On his return he called his daughter, and when she had come he said to the young men:

"My sons, you are two, and there is only one daughter; to which of you must I give her? And to which of you must I refuse her? Here is a piece of cloth; I am going to tear it in two and give a piece to each of you. The one who first finishes making a garment from it shall be my daughter's husband."

Each of the young men cut his garment and made haste to sew it while the young girl's father watched them. Then he called his daughter to the spot where the suitors were, and when she came he took some thread and gave it to her, saying: "Here is some thread, knot it and give it to these men."

She obeyed her father, took the thread and sat down beside them.

But she was sly, and neither her father nor the young men knew it. She knew already which one she loved. The father went away, entered his house and waited for the young men to sew their garments, saying: "Whichever one finishes first shall be my daughter's husband."

The girl began to knot the thread and the suitors took their needles and began to sew. But the young girl was sly. She knotted very short threads for the one she loved, and very long threads for the one she didn't love. They sewed and she knotted the threads. However, at midday she saw that they had not finished sewing; she went on, she knotted the thread and they worked. At three o'clock in the afternoon the young man who had had the short threads had finished sewing, but the one who had had the long threads had not yet finished.

Then the young girl's father rose and came to see the young men; he said to them: "You have sewed up till now and the garment is not yet finished."

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One of the two rose, took his garment and said to the father: "Father, here you are; my task is done."

The garment of the other was not yet finished. The father looked at them and he looked at them. At last he said: "My sons, when you both came to ask for my only daughter, I had no preference for one or the other; that is why I bought a piece of cloth, tore it in half, gave it to you and called my daughter to knot the thread for you, saying, 'Whoever finishes his garment first shall be my daughter's husband.' Do you understand?"

The young men replied: "Father, we understand what you say. It is like this: the man who has finished the garment is to be your daughter's husband and the one who has not finished it shall not be her husband."

It was the sly young girl who decided the question of the two young men. The father did not know that his daughter, when she knotted the thread, gave short ones to the man she loved and long ones to the one she did not love. He did not know that it was his daughter who had chosen her own husband. The father had reasoned like this: if the man who has finished sewing takes my daughter, he will work hard and support her; but will the man who has not finished his sewing work hard and support her if he marries her?

Then the two young men rose and went back to their village, but he who had finished his garment took the daughter for his wife.

Now we've finished the story of the sly young girl, as I have heard it told.

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75. THE VILLAGE OF CRAZY FOLK (*Khassonke*)

There was once a village in which all the inhabitants were crazy.

One day a herdsman and his herd lost their way in the neighbourhood of this village, and at nightfall, as there was a goat missing, the herdsman began to look about for it.

He came upon a husbandman working in his field, and said to him: "Did you happen to see a strayed goat in your field?" "My field begins before me and ends behind me," said the man. "Look and you will find it."

Seeing that he would get no help here the shepherd went away. When he had found his goat he gathered his bleating flock together to spend the night in the open, for he did not know that there was a village in the neighbourhood. Suddenly he happened to see passing by the husbandman with whom he had already spoken; he went up to him, and wanting to put himself on a friendly footing said:

"I found the goat that had strayed away; here it is. I will give it to you with pleasure if you will give me hospitality."

"Ah? Indeed!" cried the husbandman. "Here's a fine state of things! What? So you accuse me now of having stolen your goat, do you? We'll go and settle this business before the chief of the village!"

When they were in the presence of the chief the latter cried out, before the shepherd could so much as speak: "What, more gossip, is it? This sort of thing can't go on any longer; I shall quit the village!" And addressing his wife he added: "Come on! We're going away!"

The wife confided to one of her servants, sitting near her: "No, I can't go on living like this with a man who always talks of divorcing me!"

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The servant was busy shelling ground-nuts, and at the moment when her mistress spoke a beggar came up to ask for alms. The servant said to the beggar: "Would you believe, poor man, that ever since this morning I've been busy at this job, and that I haven't even eaten yet!" And without more ado she put the ground-nuts into the bowl held out to her by the beggar, who went away murmuring: "Thank you! Thank you! May God be praised!"

76. FOUNTINNDOUHA (*Gourmanti*)

A man who was very jealous of his wife had retired to live some distance from the village, so there should be no possibility of her deceiving him.

Another man named Fountinndouha determined to possess this woman. So he chose a fine fat sheep from among his herd, and went to the cautious husband. The husband asked him the object of his journey. "I am going to sell my sheep to the king of Outenou," Fountinndouha replied. "I want to see if I can't get fifteen cowries for it."

"Fifteen thousand cowries, you mean," cried the husband. "Or is it really only fifteen cowries?"

"I am asking fifteen cowries, yes."

The husband made haste to offer Fountinndouha the fifteen cowries, and in return took the sheep, which he slaughtered. The seller helped him to skin it.

Evening fell before they had finished cutting the animal up. The wife cooked a lot of the meat, and put plenty of fat with it. Fountinndouha ate with them, but for fear of giving himself diarrhoea he was careful not to take any of the fat.

The husband, on the contrary, ate to excess. As a result he was taken with violent diarrhoea.

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When it was time to go to bed, he said to Fountinndouha: "As there is only one hut here you shall sleep near the door. My wife will sleep at the end of the hut, and I between the two of you. But don't you try and take advantage of her while I am asleep."

Scarcely had they stretched out on the mats when the husband heard rumblings in his inside. He went out to run behind the bushes. Before he could get back Fountinndouha had already taken advantage of the interval.

The husband returned, but, seized again with pains in his belly he was obliged to run outside once more, and this happened seven times during the course of the night. At each of these departures Fountinndouha rejoined his host's wife, and employed his time conscientiously during the interval.

In the morning he set out, thanking the husband, and saying that he was going to the King of Outenou.

He came to the hut of the blacksmith, to whom he gave a piece of iron with which to forge him a ring.

Meantime the wife had told her husband what had happened, and confessed to him that she had lain with Fountinndouha. Furious, both husband and wife dashed after Fountinndouha with the intention of avenging themselves upon him.

When the blacksmith had finished making the ring it was about six o'clock. He held out the ring to Fountinndouha. "Give it to your wife," said Fountinndouha. "I will pass by and get it tomorrow morning."

That same night he went to the hut of the blacksmith, who was away. He entered the hut and said to the wife: "Your husband has given you to me. As a proof, he has given you my ring to keep for me." He seduced the woman, took back his ring, and left.

The next morning the first deceived husband came to the blacksmith to find out if he had seen anything of a stranger.

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"Fountinndouha just passed this way," said the workman. "He is a tall man. He slept here last night."

"That's quite right," said the blacksmith's wife. "What's more, he slept with me."

Then the two deceived husbands flung themselves on Fountinndouha's track.

The latter had by now reached the hut of a husbandman, who gave him the best of welcomes and a calabash full of rice to eat. At bedtime, Fountinndouha asked his host at what hour he might leave without disturbing anyone.

The husbandman replied: "You have only to get up at the first cock-crow." (Literally, "take the cock's throat.")

While everyone slept Fountinndouha, taking this advice to the letter, entered the chicken-yard and wrung the necks of all the fowls.

This done, he set out again on his journey.

Next morning the husbandman found all his poultry dead. At that same moment the two deceived husbands arrived, and asked whether he had seen Fountinndouha.

"We'll all three go after him," cried the husbandman. "He has killed all my fowls!"

"For our part," cried the two husbands, "it's even worse than that! He has seduced our wives!"

All three hastened in pursuit of the rascal.

The latter had walked all night and all day. Towards evening he found himself near the bank of a river where some griots, wet through by the rain, had made their camp. These griots had lighted a big fire to dry and warm themselves. Fountinndouha lay down in their midst.

When he saw that they were all asleep he took their tom-toms, big and little, and threw them on the fire. Then he ran away.

The next day the three men who were after him fell in

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with the griots, who joined them in pursuit of the practical joker.

In his flight Fountinndouha reached a village where an old woman asked him why he was running so fast.

"Outenou," he said hastily, "has sent me as his courier to give orders that by sundown there shall not be a virgin left in any village."

The old woman, terrified for her daughters, said then: "My son is away. Come, I beg of you, and do what is necessary that my daughters may satisfy Outenou's requirements!"

So Fountinndouha performed this kindness for all the old woman's daughters. When he had finished she confided to him: "It is a long time since I myself last knew the pleasures of youth; you might refresh my memory a little."

Fountinndouha could not refuse her this small service. He performed it conscientiously. Then the old woman wanted to know his name. "My name," he replied, "is *Dinndinnma sarbiari*, meaning, I begin with the best and I end with the worst!"

Then he went on his way again.

When the old woman's son returned she told him the whole affair. He was very angry and, when the other victims of this rascal came to him for information, he joined them in their pursuit of Fountinndouha. The latter came at last to Outenou-Bado's house.

"King of kings," he said to him, "some people are coming to make complaint against me. Give judgment against them, and I will promise you three idiots as a present." And Outenou promised to absolve him.

There arrived then the two husbands, the husbandman, the griots and the brother of the erstwhile virgins. Outenou heard the jealous husband first, and accused him of stealing.

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What! He had the impudence to pay only fifteen cowries for a fat sheep?

He also dismissed the blacksmith for having given the ring to his wife after showing it to Fountinndouha. He reprimanded the husbandman sharply for having told the prisoner to "take the neck of the cock," and also the griots for not having appreciated Fountinndouha's good intentions. Why had the latter thrown their wooden tom-toms on the fire? To keep it burning! So what were they complaining about?

As for the daughters of the old woman, the latter did very badly to complain of a treatment which she herself had asked for, not only for them but for her own pleasure as well.

Outenou thus dismissed all the plaintiffs.

"Now," said Fountinndouha, "I am going to get the three idiots I promised you."

He went out and met a groom who was trying to carry on his head a bundle of fodder which he had just bound. The bundle was too heavy for him. And at each attempt he untied the cord and added fresh fodder to his bundle.

Fountinndouha advised him to decrease the amount. Then he told him to follow him with his load. The groom obeyed.

They came to a baobab. A man was throwing his stick into the branches to bring down the monkey-bread. Each time he threw it the stick caught in a branch and remained hanging among the leaves. The man then climbed the tree, unhooked his stick and came down again without thinking—simple as it was—to gather the fruit among which the stick was caught.

At the moment when this simpleton was up in the tree unhooking his stick Fountinndouha called to him: "But gather the fruit, this time!" The man took his advice and threw down the monkey-bread as well as the stick. He climbed down again, gathered up the fruit, and followed Fountinndouha, on his invitation.

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All three came to a king. In the court, surrounded by huts, a big fire of straw was burning. The courtiers were gathered on the side from which the wind came, so as not to get the smoke in their faces, while the king sat on the other side, in such a position that he was fast getting smoked like a ham. His nose was running and the tears came from his eyes.

Fountinndouha took one of the courtiers by the hand and made him sit down in the king's place; then he led the king to the vacant spot.

Judging that this king was well fitted to form the third of his trio, he led him with the other two before Outenou, to whom he made a present of the three after having explained his reasons for considering them all three perfect idiots.

This done, he returned to his own village.

77. THE BAMBARA BRAGGARTS (*Peuhl*)

There were once three comrades. The first was named Samba Bimbiri Bambara; the second, Samba Kourlankana, and the third, Samba Doungouonotou.

They set out on a journey together.

They came to a well. Samba Dougounotou picked the well up as if it were an ordinary jar and began to pour water from it for each of his friends to drink. Samba Bimbiri then carried the well on his shoulder.

They went into the jungle to hunt elephants. Each one killed his dozen, and they ate them all that same day.

Samba Kourlankana met a jinn woman. He said to her: "I love you!" And he married her. He then left his companions and stayed with the jinn. The latter was called Koumba Guinné. She was very pretty and no bigger than an ordinary woman.

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Samba Kourlankana always boasted before his wife of being stronger than anyone else in the world. One day they were arguing about this, and Koumba said to her husband: "You shouldn't pretend to be stronger than you are! Come with me to visit my parents, and you will see."

"And so I will!" Samba replied.

They set out at six in the morning and walked until two. And far, very far away they saw Koumba's father lying down on the ground. One of his knees was raised; one would have taken it for a mountain!

"What's that over there?" said Samba to his wife. "Is that a mountain?"

"Oh," replied Koumba, "don't speak so lightly of my father! That is only his leg you see there."

They walked another four hours before reaching the village where Koumba's father was lying. At the sight of such a big father-in-law Samba was frightened.

Koumba's three brothers, Hammadi, Samba and Delo, were at that moment out hunting. Samba Kourlankana asked in which direction he would be likely to find them. "Over there," they told him. "All right," he said. "I will go and meet them."

He first met Hammadi, who had killed five hundred elephants. He had tied them in a bunch and carried them at his side.

"Let me carry them for you," Samba said.

"You couldn't carry them! Go further on and you will find my brother."

Samba Kourlankana met Samba, Hammadi's jinn brother. Like the latter, Samba also had killed five hundred elephants which he was carrying. "Go and find my little brother," he said in reply to Samba Kourlankana's offer of help. "Perhaps you can carry his parcel for him."

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At last Samba found himself in the presence of Delo. Delo had only killed four hundred elephants. At the moment when he met his sister's husband the strap of his sandal gave way. "You cannot carry my elephants," he said, "but take my sandal, and carry it as far as the village."

He threw his sandal at Samba Kourlankana, and it covered him so completely that he could not get out from underneath it.

Delo joined his other brothers in the village. Their father scolded them for bringing back such a poor bag that day. "What!" he cried. "A stranger comes here, my daughter's husband, and this is all you can bring me to put in the couscous!"

He looked about him, and asked: "Where is my son-in-law?"

"I met him," said Hammadi, "but I sent him on to Samba."

And Samba said: "I told him to go and find Delo."

Delo, questioned in his turn, said that he had given him the sandal with the broken strap to carry.

"Perhaps he is under the sandal," thought Koumba. "I will go and look."

She went at once to look for her husband, and on lifting the sandal found him underneath. Together they returned to the village, Koumba carrying the sandal, which was too heavy for Samba Kourlankana's strength.

The meal ready, they called Samba to eat with the others, but the calabash was too tall for him to reach the couscous. Delo, seeing his embarrassment, picked him up and set him on his knee, but Samba fell into the calabash and Delo, taking him for a piece of meat, took him up in a spoonful of couscous and put him in his mouth.

The next day Hammadi asked: "What has happened to

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Samba Kourlankana? We dined together last night . . . what can have happened to him?"

Samba was in one of Delo's hollow teeth.

"I feel something moving in my tooth," Delo declared, "and I don't know what it can be!"

"Look and see," advised his brothers.

He felt about with his finger, and touched Samba Kourlankana. He pulled him out of his tooth and set him on the ground.

Koumba Guinné came, and as she saw that it was her husband, took some water and washed him off. "You see," she said to him, "you are very wrong to think yourself better than others. But this is nothing so far! You will see more than this!"

"Koumba," he said, "ever since we married, you have always been boasting that there was no one stronger than you!"

"I see now that I was mistaken. Let us part! I am too much afraid of your race, and I want no more adventures of this kind. Return to those of your own sort!"

And they parted forever.

While these things were happening, the other two comrades were wrangling together, each maintaining that there was no one stronger than he. While they were disputing they came to a river.

"I am the master of the waters!" Samba Doungouonotou proclaimed.

"And I command the jungle!" Samba Bimbiri Bambara proudly declared.

Samba Doungouonotou straddled the river, one foot on either bank. He stooped and dipped his hand in the water. All that came within his reach, fish, hippopotami, caymans, everything, he lifted at arm's length, cooked it in the heat of the sun and ate it.

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Samba Bimbiri Bambara went into the jungle, and everything that he found on his way he caught, and like his comrade, he grilled it in the sun at arm's length, even though it were an elephant. And thus he ate.

He reached the bank of the river. He dipped his hand into the water to steal Samba Doungouonotou's fish. The latter saw him, seized him, and they began to fight, going always deeper and deeper into the jungle.

Fighting all the time, they came at last to a blind jinn who was guarding his field. This jinn had a sling with which he was hurling stones at the little birds to keep them from eating his millet. He put his hand on the two Bambara, who had fallen to the ground, still fighting. He thought he had hold of a pebble. He put them in his sling, and hurled them far away.

The two adversaries fell into a calabash in which another jinn was preparing his couscous. The jinn took them in his finger and thumb and threw them aside. They flew into the eye of a baby jinn who was suckling.

The little one put a finger to her eye, weeping. She cried out that there was something in her eye. Her mother said: "Come here and let me look!" But before she reached her mother the eye had already absorbed the two Bambara.

"It's all over now," she said to the mother jinn.

Since these three men found their masters, no one should boast that there is none stronger than he.

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CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

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CHARADES FABLES AND PROVERBS

78. THE HYENA AND THE MOON (*Zulu*)

It happened one time that the hyena found a bone, she took it and carried it away in her mouth.

The moon was at that moment shining very brilliantly, and the water was calm; the hyena saw the moon in the water and thinking it was a fat piece of meat threw her bone away in order to seize it. She plunged her head in the water up to her ears, but found nothing. The water was troubled. The hyena returned to the bank and sat there without moving. The water became clear again. The hyena made a bound and tried to hold fast, thinking she had hold of the moon, which she took for a piece of meat because she saw it shining in the water; she only seized the water, which trickled from her jaws and again became all muddy. The hyena returned to the bank.

Another hyena came, took the bone, and left the first hyena quietly there behind him. At last morning broke and the moon paled before the light of day. The hyena had lost out.

She returned another day to the same spot, where she trampled the ground but still found nothing.

So everyone laughed heartily at the hyena, seeing her run continually into the stream and snap at the water, which only trickled through her jaws, while she tried again and again, without catching anything. So when we want to make fun of

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a man now we say: "You are like the hyena, who drops her bone because she sees the moon in the water, and gets nothing in return."

79. THE THREE BROTHERS AND THE THREE CHARMS (*Masai*)

A man died and left three sons, who inherited their father's fortune, sharing thirty thousand cowries. Walking one behind another, they came to a place where three roads met. Here they sat down.

Then the eldest took one road, the younger the second, and the youngest of all the third. They agreed among themselves to meet again after three years. The three years passed; they had all returned and were seated once more at the cross-roads. Then, rising, they went towards a wide delta, which they could not cross. The eldest then took a band of linen which he threw on the water, and making a bridge, passed over; the next youngest tied some hunting arrows together, and used these to cross by; the youngest of all put on a pair of shoes and so crossed the delta.

Which of these three possessed the most powerful charm?

80. HAUSSA PROVERBS

A man is hated according to his wealth.

The rat sticks to the family like the eyebrow to the eye.

With rheumatism in the knees one dances the devil-dance.

Who goes slowly goes far.

When you find a safe road, follow it a long time.

An afternoon of happiness is worth more than a year of misery.

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It is more profitable to frequent the rich than the poor.

The patient man boils a stone until he can drink the broth.

One is betrayed only by one's own.

Seeing the eye does not stop one from eating the head.

When the heart is captive the body is enslaved. One is the slave of one's passions.

Go home and eat; with the water of the body one draws that of the well.

A lie will give blossom, but no fruit.

A lie may run for a year, but truth will overtake it in a day.

If the monkey spoils anything, he runs away before the owner of the field finds out.

Let the candid man buy a good horse to escape on when he has told the truth.

It is easier to eat a hare than an elephant.

Attend to your business yourself and you will not be cheated.

The courier rests his feet, but never his heart.

Silence is healthy.

Let go of the lion's tongue and he will eat you.

If you look for dry weather God will send rain; whoever wants to lie need only speak of the weather.

The louse will eat man, but he will not eat a stone.

A woman will find ninety-nine lies, but she will betray herself with the hundredth.

81. MASAI PROVERBS

He who does not worry about living will die without illness.

The stranger with his belly full of couscous runs to a woman, while you, who have only a scrap of wood to gnaw, must drag your saucepan after you.

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He who has nothing must brew his beer there where the guineafowl scratch, on the dunghill.

82. SESUTO PROVERBS

Wisdom has more than one dwelling.

Cunning devours its master.

He who wants to beat his dog will always find a stick.

In the brave man's house there is weeping, but in the coward's house there are no tears.

There is no doctor but is sometimes absent.

He who has done wrong forgets it, but he to whom the wrong is done does not forget.

A fatal accident gives no warning.

Death is in the fold of our mantle.

Death is always new.

The tongue has no bonds.

The snare catches him who sets it.

The thief is a dog; he pays with his head.

The thief is he who is caught.

A smile wins a smile.

Two cocks don't help one another to scratch the same ground.

The dog's sweat only wets his own skin.

A valiant man fights in the midst of his troop; he never risks himself alone.

The fire that burns you is the same as that which warms you.

A man falls with his shadow.

A village is fine, seen from without; seen from within it is a garbage-heap.

The leopard dies with his colours.

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A dead man's business never prospers.
War is a cow that one milks in the midst of thorns.
When a chief promises an ox one may build a kraal.
The jackal that lags behind is the one that the dogs see.
A lame hyena never shows himself.
The game is never killed by the one that flushes it.
The potter cooks his food in an old broken pot.
When the spring is far away one may die of thirst.
Our own sore does not hurt when we scratch it ourselves.
Lions in the same thicket know one another.
The food for which one gives thanks is that already in the belly.
The monkey doesn't see the hump on his own forehead.

83. FAN PROVERBS

One day more won't make the elephant rot.
The custom of tomorrow is like that of today.
Tomorrow and today have the same sun and the same moon.
Regular work tires a woman, but wrecks a man.
If you want peace, give ear to your wives' proposals.

84. ENGOUDA PROVERBS

When the wind blows one is cold.
There is no cure for old age.
The old bachelor does his own cooking.
However forgetful one is, one never forgets one's own mouth.
The egg becomes the cock.
If one cuts wood in the forest, echo repeats it.

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Every coloured cloth has its name.

If at first you cannot build a house, live in a hut.

Young birds have feathers, but they cannot fly.

Who marries a beautiful woman marries torment.

A dog without an ear is no hunter.

A servant loves you to your face and despises you behind your back.

News is interesting in the mouth of him who brings it.

You cannot lean on an empty space.

The fly never worries about death; he only thinks of eating.

The butcher is not concerned with the quality of the beast.

What you do not want, put aside.

Accumulation makes a big rubbish-heap.

When the hawk is in sight never leave your chickens on the rocks.

The palm of the hand deceives no one.

The only secret a tatler can keep is the one he doesn't know.

The crafty man treads a winding path.

A small bed will not hold two people.

One always sees Venus near the moon and one thinks she is her dog; Venus is not the moon's dog.

When you see a fowl at the fair you hasten to buy it, but if it were good the owner would not be selling it.

There is wisdom in treading on thorns; if you do not hunt the snake the snake will hunt you.

He who cannot catch an ant yet rushes after an elephant will only be lost.

The stream is never full enough to hide the fish from sight.

When the snail climbs he drags his shell with him.

Though you are as strong as the buffalo, you have no horns.

He who has only his eye for a bow can never shoot and kill the quarry.

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85. A SONINKE RIDDLE

Mahdi-Kama asked:

What man kills his children?
What man sells his children?
What man gives his children away?

When all his hearers had searched vainly for the answer Mahdi-Kama said:

He who marries a wife of forty, kills his children.
He who makes love to a slave, sells his children.
He who makes love to another man's wife, gives his children away.

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

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FABLES

86. THE CYCLE OF THE TREE-FROG (*Baronga*)

I.

It was like this. One fine day the gazelle got some beer ready and called all her friends to help her dig her field. They went to work on the hillside, and they dug the whole field. Then the gazelle said to the tree-frog:

"Suppose we play at running races on our way back to the house? The one who outstrips the other and gets there first must turn back again and bring a pot of beer to the one who is left behind."

They joined in the race. The tree-frog crawled on the ground, the gazelle sprang in the air and in a moment had reached the hut. She returned with a jug of beer, stopped the tree-frog on the road and said: "Here! Drink! I have beaten you."

"That's right," said the other. "Yes, you beat me."

And they began to drink the beer.

II.

When they had nearly finished the tree-frog said to her friend: "Since you say you run faster than I do, let's play at racing again." They gazelle said: "All right. Where shall we race?" The tree-frog answered: "I'll show you where we'll race."

The tree-frog went into the hut; then the gazelle made a

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rampart all around and stopped up the doorway, and the tree-frog said: "Take a light and set fire to the hut, since you outstripped me in the race." And the gazelle really set fire to the hut.

Then the tree-frog called out: "Hi, gazelle, where can I take refuge?" She answered: "Get into the big saucepan!"

"But there are others already in the big saucepan! Where can I take refuge?"

"Get into the big basket!"

The tree-frog answered: "But there are others already in the big basket!" Then the gazelle said: "All right, then, die! Burn up with the house and turn into a little bit of cinder!"

Now, the tree-frog crept into the earth; she dug a little crack and hid herself. As for the hut, it burned up completely and disappeared.

The rain began to fall. . . . The tree-frog came out again, together with her brothers, her wives and her children. Her village grew big and formed a large circle. The gazelle said to her: "Oh, my dear friend, you ran faster than I did! You beat me!" She went to sleep somewhere else, a long way off, for she feared the neighbourhood of the big tree-frog village. And it was the tree-frog who gave food to the gazelle and became her superior.

Then the gazelle said to her: "That's all right; that's as it may be! But now I want to go into the hut too; set fire to it!" The tree-frog said: "Not at all! Because you are a great jumper, whereas I live on the ground." But the gazelle insisted, and said: "No, no! I myself want it! If I burn with the hut, what does it matter?" The tree-frog replied: "If you really want it, all right! I was only taking pity on you."

So then the gazelle went into the hut and took her horns with her. The tree-frog surrounded the hut with thorns and closed it tightly. Then she took a light and set fire to it.

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It took fire and burned. The gazelle cried: "Mother tree-frog, I am burning! Where can I take refuge?" The tree-frog said: "Get into the big saucepan!" She said: "There are others already in the big saucepan." "Then get into the big basket!" "There are others already in the big basket!" The tree-frog said: "Very well, then! Fry up and turn into a little bit of cinder! May there be nothing left of you! Disappear and take your horns with you!" The gazelle looked at the ground; she tried to dig it up with her horns, the fire came and burned her up! She lay on her back, her legs stretched out . . . and her horns frizzled up and were consumed!

III.

So then the tree-frog began by cutting them off; then she put the gazelle in the shade, in the village square, and cut her up; she cut off her four legs, the front ones and the back ones, and made a trumpet out of the bones. Then she went off, far, far away along the road, and left her village.

She made a little heap of leaves, climbed on it, and lived there. Presently she felt the rain falling and began to sing:

Bvembvelekou-bvekou!
Antelope, you said, "Let's play at running races!"
Didn't I run better than you, old girl?

IV.

The hare came by and said: "What's this sound of trumpets I hear? Where does it come from, my friend?"

She said to him: "Oh, it comes from over there, far away over by that fig-tree. Go and see."

When he got there he heard the noise again, behind him. A

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gazelle came, and then another gazelle; the tree-frog said to them: "Go and look over there, there by that big tree!" . . . The lion came too; she said to him: "Go and look over there! Listen to those trumpets; it's over there they're playing them!" . . . The elephant came too, and said: "Where does that noise come from, godmother, daughter of the crocodile?" She answered him the same way.

V.

Now the hippopotamus came by. He stood near; he didn't go over there with the others. He hid himself and said: "This girl here is deceiving us! The sound comes from here . . . quite near her mouth. That heap of leaves now, that she built . . . why is she sitting on it? She built it to play the trumpet from! I see it all very well!" All at once he heard the noise behind him; he returned at a gallop and said to her: "Ah, so this is how you deceive these fine people! Let's hear how the noise sounds near you, tree-frog!"

VI.

He took the trumpet and tried to blow it. But he couldn't blow it; he only went *pff*. No sound came out. The tree-frog took the trumpet again, and the sound was perfect. The hippopotamus said to her: "Come now! These trumpets . . . what did you make them out of?"

"With the antelope's bones," she replied. "We played at running races . . . I beat her . . . then I made holes in her bones and now I play the trumpet! Try it yourself!"

He couldn't do it, and he said to her: "Lend it to me, I'll go and play it at home."

The tree-frog refused, saying: "Not at all! For how shall I play it myself? You just want to annoy me."

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"And why should I annoy you? You are very smart! Just because you've got a trumpet you think you're the master, eh?"

The tree-frog replied: "I am not the master, but I object, because you say you want to take my trumpet home with you."

VII.

Now the hippopotamus took away her trumpet, and he made a big river appear. He crossed to the other side and went off with the trumpet. The tree-frog went "Oo-ooh!" She struck her lips and said: "We shall meet again, my trumpet and I! As for that water there, that doesn't worry me at all." So then she began to swell herself out; she made herself very big, she swelled out on the water till she reached the other side. She took note of the hippopotamus's tracks and followed them. Then the hippopotamus made a great heat come. The tree-frog passed through this by hiding herself in the sand.

She went on without fear of anything. At sunset she came out, in spite of the wasps and the bees that the hippopotamus had sent against her to play a trick on her, so that she would get stung and turn back again. The tree-frog made a gluey liquid all around her body and the wasps flew away. She went on. But he put a swamp in her path. The tree-frog passed the swamp. Then he made a new river. The tree-frog stopped at the ford and built a village; she built it very carefully. Then she took a leaf, got inside it with her assegais, crossed the water and went to take the hippopotamus by surprise. He was lying on his back on the sand, with his legs in the air, warming himself in the sun.

VIII.

The tree-frog came out of her leaf and went up to him, but at the very moment when she was going to kill him with her assegais a bird flew by and said:

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"Jump into the water, you hippopotamus with the dumpy legs, you are going to be killed!"

The hippopotamus rushed into the water, going "Boo-oo-oo!" He went into the river with the trumpet. The tree-frog was afraid to cross the river again, so she stayed there.

The next morning the tree-frog went to spy on the bird, and killed him. She plucked him, she lit a fire with bits of wood, she put the bird on it and burned him all up. She dug a hole, buried his bones, and covered them with sand.

In the morning she found the hippopotamus stretched on his back, unable to play. But at the moment when the tree-frog was about to run him through the bird's feathers came to life again and cried out: "Run away, hippopotamus with the dumpy legs, they are going to kill you!" The hippopotamus went "Boo-oo-oo" in the water; he threw himself in. In the morning the tree-frog returned, burned the grass all around and the feathers were destroyed.

The next day she again found the hippopotamus stretched out. She threw her assegai. All at once a feather rose up, came out from the hollow tree where it had fallen, and cried: "Run away, hippopotamus with the dumpy legs, they will kill you!" The hippopotamus went "Boo-oo-oo" in the water, and disappeared.

Then the tree-frog went to sleep for three days. The hippopotamus said to himself: "It's all right. She's all tired out now! I'm going to keep her trumpet!" He came out from the water and learned to play all by himself. But the tree-frog was spying on him. In the morning she found him lying on his back, with his legs in the air, playing the trumpet.

She ran him through with three assegais. He said: "My dear friend, let me go, I beg you! Take back your trumpet!" The tree-frog said: "Not at all! I mean to make holes in your bones, and make myself another one!" She killed him, took

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her trumpet, then she seized her knife and started to cut him up. But lo, the knife broke! She took an axe and sharpened it: as she was about to cut the flesh with it the axe made a nick in itself, instead.

IX.

Now the chameleon came by and said: "Hey, friend! Here are fine provisions! I too am a traveller on the road, but I will gladly carouse with you and fill my belly in your company!" The tree-frog said to him: "Alas, how can we carouse? Look! I have nothing to cut this beast up with! My little knife and my axes are all broken."

The chameleon replied: "Ho! What does that matter! That's nothing. Suppose we try this?" He took out some splinters of reed from the wallet he carried at his side. "Shall we try?" "Ah," said the tree-frog, "you won't succeed! He is a terribly tough hippopotamus!"

The chameleon took hold of a leg, lifted it, and said: "There! I go *zut!* See how well this splinter cuts! I can take this leg off for you splendidly!" And in fact he cut up the whole hippopotamus from end to end, down to the very last bit.

Then he said: "For my part, I am going to stay here; I shan't move, my friend! I am your son; here is meat." The tree-frog agreed to this arrangement. She said: "All right." They ate and caroused on the meat and got thoroughly drunk. They even built a village on that very same spot.

X.

Then the tree-frog said to her companion: "I must go away; since you are my son, stay here and take care of my village and my wives." She gathered a bundle of tobacco and gave it to him.

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She went and found a pipe and made him a present of it. She also took some pincers and gave them to him, she took a trumpet and gave it to him. Then she laid some eggs on the road and said to the chameleon: "You see these eggs. Let the wayfarer go his way. If he crushes the eggs, he crushes them; if he spares them, he spares them."

She set out. She went to the mountain to forge some assegais for her friend the chameleon, for he was only a simple-minded person and had no weapons.

XI.

The gazelle came by. "Greetings, old chameleon!" He replied: "Greetings!" She asked: "Who do those eggs belong to?"

"They belong to the tree-frog, daughter of the crocodile. She said: 'Let the wayfarer go his way; if he crushes them, he crushes them; if he spares them, he spares them.' "

Then the gazelle said: "*I* don't want to crush them; I am too much afraid, for she has already killed one of my relatives." And she ran away in a hurry.

The hare came by and said: "Greetings, chameleon! Whose eggs are those?"

"They belong to the tree-frog, the crocodile's daughter. She said: 'Let the wayfarer go his way; if he crushes them, he crushes them; if he spares them, he spares them.' "

Then the hare ran away with great leaps, enormous leaps. He went away off, a long way off. He fled into the forest.

The big antelope came at a gallop: *Hiri, hiri, hiri!* till she got quite close to the eggs; there she stopped short, her hooves stretched out, quite close; jumped backward, and asked the chameleon what that was. When she heard she ran away, saying: "In another moment I should have crushed them!"

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She went round by the coast, making a great detour, very far away.

XII.

But now the elephant came by. He said: "Greetings, my friend." The chameleon answered in a frightened trembling voice: "Good . . . day!"

He came near, saw the eggs, and said: "Whose eggs are those?"

The chameleon answered, trembling with fear: "They belong to . . . the tree-frog . . . she said . . . let the wayfarer . . . go his way . . . if he crushes them . . . he crushes them . . . if he spares them . . . he spares them. . . ."

Coming within reach of the chameleon the elephant said: "Hand me your pipe!" He gave it to him. The elephant put some tobacco in the pipe, picked up a coal with the pincers, lit the pipe and began to smoke with all his might, making great clouds. Soon the tobacco was all consumed. When it was finished the elephant poured out the ashes into his hand, crushed them and threw them in the chameleon's eyes. Then he caught hold of him, tore off his limbs and threw them far away, to the four winds. Then he went and broke the eggs! He crushed them, made them into an omelette underfoot, and left.

XIII.

Now, a wind began to rise in the south. Soon the chameleon's head flew back, then one front leg, then another, They joined themselves to his body again as they were before, his tail came back too and flew into place. He began to revive a little, he began to walk again, and went to look at the eggs . . . he stared at them. Then he went and got his trumpet, which he found in the crack of the tree, in his village; he began to follow the tree-frog's tracks, singing:

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Pchiyo-yo! Tree-frog, daughter of the crocodile . . .
Pchiyo-yo!
They have crushed your eggs!
It was the elephant that crushed them . . .
The elephant with the big bottom!
Pchiyo-yo!

He walked, singing day and night, till he reached the spot where the tree-frog was.

The tree-frog heard him a long way off. She told the blacksmiths to be quiet with their bellows, saying: "Silence! I hear someone coming!" And she called out to him: "Come here!"

She listened, she listened to the song, without saying anything. When he came up to her she asked him all about what had happened, adding: "That's all right! Hurry up with the forging!" They forged all the assegais that were wanted. She gave them to them. She distributed them. She took her own one too. "I will not take leave of you," she said. "I must set out."

XIV.

They started out . . . they even walked during the night. At dawn they were still walking; they walked day and night till they reached their village. They picked up the trail of the elephant, they followed in the direction he had gone and came to a village where they asked: "Did the elephant pass this way?"

They answered: "Yes, he passed through this country a year ago, during the winter."

They went on; they walked and they walked, always following the trail. They came to some other people and questioned them. They replied: "He passed by here some time ago. It was perhaps during the last moon; keep on."

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They followed the tracks once more, and went to ask in another village. "He has just passed," they told them. "You won't be long finding him." They kept on their way, asking in other places. They were told: "He was here a moment ago; we just drank some beer with him." They passed by this village, and found him. He turned back, looked behind him, and saw them. "Hey, friend!" they called to him. "Stop and wait for us!" He would not listen, but went right on.

XV.

Then the chameleon outstripped the tree-frog, caught up with the elephant and said to him: "Wasn't it you who passed by my way and killed me, under the fruit tree in my village?" The tree-frog came up and ran him through with a spear. The chameleon did the same. The elephant broke off a dead branch and threw it at them. The chameleon caught it with his tail, wrapped his tail round it and threw it far away. The tree-frog ran him through again and so did the chameleon. The elephant started to run away. The others ran after him, caught up with him, pierced him again and again. The elephant was vanquished, and died.

XVI.

When he was dead, they began to build a village there, and they cut up his body.

The first who came to do homage to them was the hare. He helped them in their task. The tree-frog, however, said to the chameleon: "I must bury myself in the earth, for there is no rain and I suffer from the heat." The chameleon said: "All right." He made a big drum. Before going underground, the tree-frog ordered them: "Make a fence of thorns all around the village; leave only two gates, and you, hare, must close them

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at sunset, so that others won't come and eat our provisions that are hanging up in the trees." Then, having said this, she dug herself into the earth.

XVII.

Then the chameleon took his drum and began to beat it everywhere outside the fence; he made a big tour, singing:

Plan! Plan! Pat-a-plan!
All you beasts of the countryside, come and see the tree-frog,
The tree-frog who is dead!

They all came, and all crowded inside the fence. There were the elephant, the antelope, the big lizard, the tortoise, the panther and many others! They came eagerly, for the tree-frog had worried them all a great deal with the story of her eggs, and with setting a trap to kill them.

Then the chameleon went and closed the door during the night. He shut all the openings, then he went to wake the tree-frog, saying: "Tree-frog, I tell you! Wake up! Wake up! Come and see what's outside here!" When she had woken up she took her assegais, in the morning, and began to spear all the animals. Some ran away, others stayed. The hare showed his fellow-hares a little hole in the fence by which he was accustomed to go in and out. Several slipped outside through this hole and ran away; the dead remained! Some of the animals were made captive, and the hare also became the slave of the tree-frog.

XVIII.

They cut up all the animals that were killed and gave the tripe to the hare, saying: "Go and wash them in the river." He began by bringing the tripe back. But one fine day he met his mother, while he was laden with meat. He gave it to her.

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Then he scratched himself all over with dead branches, he looked for a thorny spot and threw himself on it. When he reached the village his ears were hanging down pitifully. He said: "Chief, I was caught by an eagle who carried off the tripe!" They replied: "That doesn't matter. It is just a misfortune!"

They gave him some more. He went, and returned with it.

He went another time, but gave it to his mother again, and returned saying: "It was a sparrow-hawk who stole it from me."

Then they sent the elephant, saying: "You go and wash the tripe; we will see if it is carried off by a sparrow-hawk!" While he was on his way to wash it the mother hare arrived, the one who had stayed at home. She was afraid of the elephant and said: "What? So someone else has come to wash the tripe; it is not my son, who usually does that job." The elephant returned to the village with the meat; they said: "Aha! Isn't he bringing back the tripe! So today there wasn't any sparrow-hawk!"

The elephant said: "I didn't see any sparrow-hawk. All I saw was just a hare."

The tree-frog said to her people: "Go after her and kill her." And so they killed the mother hare.

XIX.

They gave the tripe to the hare again, saying: "Go and wash it." He returned then with his load. Then the tree-frog asked her people: "Did he bring the tripe back?" And then the hare heard them telling how they had killed his mother. He went and sat down in the middle of the smoke and began to weep for her. They asked him: "Why are you weeping?" He said: "It's because I'm sitting in the smoke; it brings the tears to my eyes."

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XX.

They finished eating the tripe; then they made up their bundles, tied up some loads of meat and all returned with the tree-frog to her village, where she had played at running races with the gazelle.

On the way she said to the chameleon: "I want to return to the village where I was born. Perhaps you would rather go to your own country?" He replied: "I will never leave you; we will go together." She said to her subjects: "Take your choice also; those who want to leave me must say so." They replied: "We will go with you, our chief; we will never leave you."

So they took up their bundles and followed her. . . .

87. THE FOX AND THE HYENA (*Haussa*)

Here is a story, but I don't know all of it; I only know a part.

The fox went into the water; he caught a lot of fish. He took them out, he ate them, and was very pleased. He left the rest, saying: "Who will help me to eat this fish?" He said: "Who will give me a big belly?" He waited a little. The hyena came. He saw the hyena; he said: "Here is a lot of meat. If you want to eat it, eat it." The hyena ate up all the fish. The fox was angry with the hyena. A hen came; she sat on a tree and cackled. The hyena saw the hen, her beautiful body all patterned; the hyena said: "Who will give me as fine patterns as the hen has?" The fox said to him: "It is I who make those fine patterns." The hyena said: "Don't you want to make me some fine patterns like that?" He replied: "If you want some patterns, bring me a knife and some white clay."

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The hyena was very simple; he went, he brought a knife and some white clay. He did not know that the fox was angry because he had eaten all his fish. The fox took the knife and the hyena sat down. He made some cuts on his back, singing:

You have eaten up all my fish,
But I will revenge myself on your back!

He slashed him with his knife, he made some fine gashes. The hyena ran away; he felt ill. And the fox laughed because he had gashed the hyena's body so well.

88. THE HARE AND THE EARTH (*Lour*)

The hare said one day to the Earth: "Don't you ever move? You always stay in the same place." "You are mistaken," replied the Earth. "I move faster than you do." "We'll see about that," returned the hare, and he began to run. When he had run a long way he stopped, feeling sure he had won, but found that he still had the earth under his feet. He began again and ran so hard that he fell exhausted and died.

89. THE BARNDOOR FOWL AND THE TORTOISE (*Onniouro*)

One day the barndoor fowl said to the tortoise: "I am much more gifted than you, for I can not only run fast but I can also fly." "You are lucky," cried the tortoise. "As for me, it is only by dragging myself along that I can attend more or less to my business." Now it happened that a man who was hunting set fire to the grass on the plain; the fire closed round the two animals in a ring, exposing them to certain danger. The

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tortoise hid himself in a hole made by the foot-print of an elephant and so escaped, but the barndoor fowl, who tried to take flight, fell stifled by the smoke and was killed.

He who boasts too much often fails in the test.

90. THE HARE, THE ELEPHANT AND THE HIPPOPOTAMUS *(Masai)*

A hare had eaten the elephant's credit-loan, and he had eaten the hippopotamus's credit-loan. He said to the hippopotamus: "In seven days I will pay an ox." And he said to the elephant: "In seven days I will pay an ox." The seven days passed, he led the elephant to the edge of the river, he gave a rope to the elephant and he gave the other end of the rope to the hippopotamus, who was in the river. He told the elephant to pull on the rope, that it was an ox, and he told the hippopotamus to pull on the rope, that it was an ox. The elephant pulled and the hippopotamus pulled. Now the hippopotamus came out from the water, he saw the elephant and the elephant also saw the hippopotamus. The elephant asked the hippopotamus and the hippopotamus asked the elephant: "Why are you pulling there, you?" And the hippopotamus told the elephant that a hare had eaten his credit-loan, promising him an ox. The elephant told the hippopotamus that a hare had eaten his credit-loan and had promised him an ox. The hippopotamus said to the elephant: "Go and look for the hare in the jungle." The elephant said to the hippopotamus: "Go and look for the hare in the river." And the elephant looked for the hare, saw the hare, said to the hare: "I am looking for a hare." And the hare said: "In truth, a hare having taken his spittle spat on me." The hare having found a decaying hind clothed himself in it. And the hare went to the river. Then

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the hippopotamus said to him: "On coming out of the water I saw a hare." And the hare told the hippopotamus that a hare from whom he claimed back the credit-loan had spat on him and made him all putrid. Then the hare ran away and hid the decayed hind's skin. Now, the elephant came back, and the hare having returned, he asked him for his cowries; but the hare said to him: "I am going to spit on you!" And the elephant was frightened and ran away.

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CHAPTER TWENTY

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POEMS SONGS AND DANCES

91. THE WIND (*Bushman*)

THE wind was once a person. He became a being with feathers, and he flew, for he could no longer walk as he used to do; in fact he flew, and he lived in the mountains. Also, he flew. He used to be a person; that is why he used once to roll a ball; he threw it, because he felt that he was a person. He became a being with feathers and then he flew, he lived in a cave in the mountain. He came out, he flew, and returned home. He went there to sleep; he woke early and went out; again he flew far away. He returned once more to his home because he felt that he needed some food. He ate again, and again and again; he returned to the house; again he went there to sleep.

92. THE PHANTOM BIRD (*Chinyanja*)

There was once a man, and he killed a big bird, took off its skin and put it to dry on the roof. Then the owner of the skin went into the garden. This skin then changed itself into the same bird, made a drum, called all the chickens and danced the Chelecheteche.

A na ngo tu ng'ande
Chelecheteche,
Che, che, che,

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Chelecheteche,
Che, che, che,
A ne ngo ku tu ng'ande.

When it was over, he caught hold of a chicken to eat it. The next day the owner of this bird skin went into the garden. This skin changed itself again into the same bird; it called the chickens; it danced the Chelecheteche. The people had hidden themselves to see how it managed to eat all the chickens; they saw this big bird, the transformed one, and they killed it.

I have ground the bean soup, on my knees, before the door, and I enter. Take the potatoes from the fire; they are burning!

93. THE DEATH OF BARAGOUAND (*Masai*)

I was taking a rest, when I met a child who came to tell me of the death of my dear Baragouand, Baragouand who was my comrade and whom death took from me. The child having risen came in to me, and taking my pouch and my quiver I went out to attend Baragouand's funeral. I set out and I see before me a pit dug in the ground. "Is that the grave of Baragouand?" I ask. They tell me to keep straight on my way. I see an ant-hill. "Is it there," I say, "the grave of this dear Baragouand?" And they tell me once more to go straight ahead. The plain appears before our eyes. "Here is the grave," they tell me. "Oh, my father," I cry, "I want to salute your children in their grief and desolation!" "They have gone away," they say, "to the market of Samba." I go to find them, but they have gone to Doduoko, and it is there that I see them. Then they buy me some fritters. "But I don't want any ass dung," I tell them. And they buy a cake. "Nor ox dung," I reply. Then they give me a spindle. "What?" I

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cry. "It is too old!" And then they buy me a fowl. "This fowl," I tell them again, "is too old." "Woman," I say, "take some millet and give it to me." And I gave her back my fowl, then I had some millet given to my fowl. But it happened that a hawk took the fowl, that a straw arrow killed the hawk, that the fire burned the arrow, that the water quenched the fire, that an elephant drank the water, that a hunter killed the elephant, that a scorpion bit the hunter's foot, that a stone crushed the scorpion, that the stone rolls, rolls for ever, and the poor Baragouand rests in his grave.

FUNERAL TOM-TOM

Kum da kume le lagh da mhume!
La! La! Ye! siligha dikke m dwellê, base mam!
La! La! ko paongho!
M dwelle kum dikke m!
M dwelle n terhde ko lebugho!

Death has killed and the grave-digger has buried!
Ha! Ha! Alas! The hawk has taken my friend, has left me!
Ha! Ha! Without possession!
Death has taken my friend from me!
My friend has gone, to return no more!

Laghda kyeda, kyeda, di bili, kyeda daosea massa
Kum ko kum dwelle, ti m be m tore!
La! La! Ye! siligha dikke m dwelle n zwetta!
La! La! ko paongho!

The lagda cuts, cuts the pieces of wood, cuts the fresh green wood.
Death has not killed my friend, since I myself live.
Ha Ha! Alas! The hawk has taken my friend, fleeing away,
Ha! Ha! without welcome!

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94. THE CHANT OF ELIFAM (*Masai*)

THE CHORUS: O men, O men, sing, hi! Here is Fam, the father, oh! yes, you, Ebilam!

THE CHIEF: Oh father, O Fam, oh! Elifam, oh! Sing, oh, sing!

THE CHORUS: Come, come here! oh! Come, come here; oh! oh! Protector, oh!

THE CHIEF: Oh, Father Fam, father, come, come here, oh! oh!

THE CHORUS: Come, come here, oh! Come, come here, oh, oh!

THE CHIEF: Oh! Fam has left the middle of the forest, come, come here, oh!

THE CHORUS: Come, come here, oh! Come, come here, oh! oh!

THE CHIEF: Fam has remained the protector, he is the strength of the people, oh yes!

THE CHORUS: Come, oh! Come, oh! Come, come here, oh!

THE CHIEF: He is the chief of men for driving away care, oh! man, oh!

CHORUS: Come, come here, oh! Come, come here, oh, oh!

THE CHIEF: He is the father of our race and he is the founder of the sons of Fam, oh!

CHORUS: Come, come here, oh! Come, come here, oh! oh!

95. THE SONG OF THE GUN (*Masai*)

INVITATION

Oh, listen, all you people, listen to the song, the song of the gun!

CHORUS

Oh, listen, all of us, listen to the song, the song of the gun!

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SONG

For you alone, O gun, for you alone,
In the depths of the woods,
Far, far away, I have marched long in the forest,
Hearing no more the barking dogs;
No longer hearing them,
Nor the cocks that love noise,
No more the cocks.
Going far away from the scolding women,
Going far from their dark huts!

REFRAIN

Yes, for you alone, O my gun,
For you alone, in the woods,
Far into the woods I have gone,
O my gun, for you alone.

INVITATION

Come, all of you, listen to the song of the fetich,
The song beloved of the gun!

CHORUS

We all come, we all listen to the song of the gun,
The song beloved of the spirit.
Yes, for you alone, O my gun,
For you alone in the woods,
Into the woods I have gone,
O my gun, for you alone!

INVITATION

Come, come all of you! Listen well and listen in silence!

CHORUS

And in silence we listen, attentive!

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SONG

For you alone, O gun, for you alone,
Forward into the woods,
Far away from the village,
I have taken the men's big knife,
With none to see me,
The knife hanging from the hook on the post;
I took the knife,
I hung it at my side,
I hung it from my belt
With none to see me.
Into the woods I went,
O my gun, for you alone!

INVITATION

Come, all of you, listen to the song of the fetich,
The song beloved of the gun!

CHORUS

We all come, we all listen,
He has taken the knife,
With none to see him!

SONG

For you alone, O gun, for you alone,
Along the hunting-paths,
I have wounded my foot on the path,
I have climbed the mountains and the hills,
I have crossed the streams,
Laboring all day, through the whole day,
I have searched for the esoir,
The esoir, the evin and vyo:
Then laying bare their flesh,

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Stripping them of their coats,
Their garment red with blood:
There lives the spirit of the forest!

INVITATION

Come, all of you, let us mingle the esoir, the evin and the vyo.
Make magic for the gun!

CHORUS

We all come to mingle the esoir, the evin and the vyo.
We make magic for the gun,
Laying bare their flesh,
We will pile up their coats,
Their garments of red blood,
To clothe this weapon,
We will make magic for the gun!

96. THE CROCODILE SONG (*Masai*)

The elephant has slipped, has slipped on a dropping;
The tree leans;
Lift it up again,
It leans again here,
Push it to the left,
It leans again there,
Push it to the right;
Let not your strength remain silent, moveless.

Turn here, go backwards,
This ground is hard.

Protector of our fathers, do not close your ears,
Be the protector of your children.

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Turn here and turn there,
The snare is set.

We have prepared food for you,
The hearthstone is pushed back,
Do not delay your aid, O father crocodile;
I would dwell on the banks of the river;
Our forefathers have known victory,
The initiation rites have been performed for those who come after them!

97. SONG OF THE PYGMIES (*Pygmy*)

The forest is wide, the wind is good;
Forward the Be-ku, bow in hand!
This way, then that way, that way and this way.
A pig! Who will kill the pig?
Nku. But who will eat him? Poor Nku!
Cut it up all the same; you shall feast on the tripe!

Bang! An elephant falls!
Who killed him? Nku.
Who will have his fine tusks? Poor Nku!
Lay him low all the same; they will leave you his tail . . .

Without a dwelling, just like the monkeys;
Who gathers the honey? Nku.
And who licks it up and fills his belly? Poor Nku!
Fetch it down all the same; they will leave you the wax!

The Whites are there, the good Whites!
Who dances? Nku.
But who smokes his tobacco? Poor Nku!
Sit down all the same, and hold out your hand!

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98. THE DANCE OF THE ANIMALS (*Pygmy*)

MBA-SOLE The fish goes . . .

ALL TOGETHER Hip!

MBA-SOLE The bird goes . . .

ALL TOGETHER Viss!

MBA-SOLE The marmot goes . . .

ALL TOGETHER Gnan!

MBA-SOLE

I throw myself to the left,
I turn myself to the right,
I am the fish
Who glides in the water, who glides,
Who twists himself, who leaps!
Everything lives, everything dances, everything sings . . .

ALL TOGETHER

The fish: Hip!
The bird: Viss!
The marmot: Gnan!

MBA-SOLE

The bird flies,
Fly, fly, fly,
Goes, comes back, passes,
Mounts, hovers and drops down.
I am the bird!
Everything lives, everything dances, everything sings . . .

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ALL TOGETHER

The fish: Hip!
The bird: Viss!
The marmot: Gnan!

MBA-SOLE

The monkey, from bough to bough,
Runs, leaps and jumps,
With his wife, with his little one,
His mouth full, his tail in the air:
This is the monkey! This is the monkey!
Everything lives, everything dances, everything sings . . .

ALL TOGETHER

The fish: Hip!
The bird: Viss!
The marmot: Gnan!

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CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

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MODERN TALES

99. BIG-HEAD (*Ronga*)

A WOMAN gave birth to some children, and brought them up. They all died. Then she became old, and incapable of working her field. Then, in order to live, she went and hung about the doors of the white people to ask for food. She begged from the whites. They had enough of her, and gave her a pea. She went to cook it and eat it. The next day she became all swelled up from this pea. When she had slept two more nights, the woman saw that she was pregnant. Now she was quite old; she was like Memounouayana. When she was advanced in pregnancy she could no longer go and beg her food. Then, when the pains came and she was brought to bed she found, when she was delivered, that her child had no legs. He had only a head, a chest, and hands. His name was Big-Head. Before they had cut the cord even he said: "Ah, my mother, what does this mean, that you do not spread a mat on the ground for me, like all the other women do when their children are born?" "But, my son," she said, "I have no mat!" Big-Head replied: "Mother, go and find me a piece of paper so that I can write something; I will give it to you and you will take it away with you." His mother went and picked up a piece of paper in the streets and gave it to him. Now, all he needed for writing had come out with him from his mother's womb; the inkpot too had come with him from his mother's womb.

Big-Head wrote to the governor and asked him for a sheet to cover him, a piece of stuff to sew a dress for his mother, a cow

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which they could milk, a young servant, a sack of rice, groundnuts, some peas, some millet, some sorghum, and finally a goat. When he had finished writing he gave the letter to his mother that she might take it to the governor. His mother set out with the paper, and found a guard at the door. They let her go in; she entered, and gave the letter to the governor. He read it, understood its meaning, and gave Big-Head all that he asked for. He called porters to carry all these things. Then the governor wrote a letter telling Big-Head to come the next day.

Big-Head's mother went on ahead. When the porters arrived they set down their loads. She said to them: "Cut up the goat, so that I can eat like nurses do." The porters cut it up, took a little meat from each joint and ate it. Then they left; when they had gone, in the morning, she heated some water, washed herself, and bathed the child. They set out for the governor's house. When they arrived the governor said to the mother: "Give me the child to see." He began to be very happy, the governor, and he called his daughter, Minina.

When Minina had taken the baby she was very happy, and refused to give it back to the mother. Then her father grew angry; he took the child from her by force and gave it to its mother. The mother then returned home. From that time Minina refused to take food; she even wanted to kill herself; she slept for three days without eating anything at all. Her father was angry and said to her: "What! You refused the fine suitors that came to ask your hand in marriage, and even the white gentlemen, and you love Big-Head! This brings shame upon me!"

He then wrote to the white authorities and called them together to discuss the affair in order that Minina should be imprisoned and put to death. They met together, and the young girl's father said: "I don't want to kill her, for if I kill her she will not suffer any more. We must have a fanfare played

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and escort her back to Big-Head. She shall take no change of clothing, but go only in what she stands up in."

When they had driven her out she set forth quite happily, saying: "The governor has done me a really good turn! They are sending me to Big-Head! My heart is full of joy!"

Minina had a great love for him. She carried him on her back while she worked. His mother said to her: "Give him to me, and rest yourself a little!" Minina refused, saying: "Let me be, mother! I can carry him, all right!" They did not have a proper house. It was only a tiny hut. They had to put their legs outside when they slept, there was only room for their heads in the hut.

Now Big-Head, seeing that they had not a proper hut, went out during the night and said: "Ring, my ring, ring of my father, let there be a house that I can sleep in!" He went back to sleep. Then there rose up two European houses, white people's houses. One for his mother and the other for himself and his wife. There also appeared trunks full of clothes for him and his wife. There also came forth servants and serving-men. In the morning, before rising, the mother said to Minina: "I have had a dream; go and get the keys I dreamed about. They are there just above our heads. Go and open, look inside the rooms and see what is in the trunks; perhaps my dreams are really true!"

When Minina had opened she looked in and saw beautiful dresses such as she had never seen before. She asked Big-Head: "Where do all these things come from?" She was full of joy; she wrote a letter to her father and mother to tell them about it, saying: "Although you drove me out, I have not lacked a single thing ever since I came here!" But her parents did not write any letters to her, for they were angry that they had brought such a badly-behaved daughter into the world.

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They had a daughter who refused her fine suitors to fall in love with a being who had no legs!

Now at night, when they were all asleep, Big-Head, seeing that Minina was tired of carrying him about all the time, tried to come forth from his own head. When he had come forth, he went and opened his trunk and dressed himself in his clothes, with all his ornaments, his sabre and his chief's helmet; he sat down at the table and ate all the food which had been put aside for breakfast the next morning. When he had finished it he smoked a cigar. When he had done smoking he threw away all that was left; then he took a piece of paper and wrote. He re-read what he had written in a low voice, afraid of speaking loud in case he should wake Minina. When he had read the letter he took off his clothes, went back into his head and slept again.

At daybreak he called Minina and said to her: "Get up and warm me some food, so I can eat." Now, he had never done this before. Minina rose, she went to look for some food and found that there was no more left; she said: "Mother, there is no more food. Who can have eaten it all?" Big-Head said to her: "It hasn't been eaten; it is you who want to deprive me of it! You won't give me any breakfast, but you feast your lovers! I shall drive you out; I am going to punish you! I shall do as your own parents did before!" Minina was very sad, and wept; she said: "It hurts me that you should say I give food to my lovers, when I never look at other men! I had rather you insulted me right out, or even beat me, sooner than say things like that!"

Then Minina told her young servant, who was about as big as Domingo: "I shall send men to kill you, because it is you who eat up the food and cause me to be insulted!" She scolded the little girl, saying: "I will forgive you this once, but if you eat up what is left again tonight, tomorrow I shall send

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men to kill you." These threats of death terrified the child, since it was not she who had eaten the food. She made a hole in her blanket, making it big enough for her eyes to peep through, so as to watch who ate up the food in their house, while everyone was asleep. When the sun had set and she had gone to bed, the little girl watched through the hole that she had made, while the others were sleeping. Big-Head began to come out of his head and change himself into a man with legs. He did as he had done the night before. When he ate the little girl saw him, and said: "They want to kill me, but it is he who eats up all the food!" When daylight approached Big-Head hastened to wake Minina and say to her: "Get me some food." When she went to look for it she found none, and Big-Head, as on the day before, fell into a fury with her. Minina was angry with the child and wanted to kill her.

But the child said: "Mother, do not kill me; spare my life! You can kill me tomorrow." She added: "It is Big-Head who eats the food. We have never seen a white man as handsome as he is when he comes out of his head; I saw him through the hole that I made in the blanket. Today I will give you a string; after sunset you must tie it to your leg. When he comes out I will pull on the string and wake you up, and you will see him; but don't rush here and there . . . be in the room before him when he goes to lay down his clothes, and seize him at that moment."

When they had gone to bed Big-Head began to come out from his head and put on his clothes; he took some food, ate, and did as on the other days. The young girl woke Minina by means of the string, and she saw what really happened. Then, as soon as Big-Head went to lay down his clothes so as to return into his own head, Minina went first and caught hold of him. Big-Head said: "Let me go, Minina, so I can return into my own head just for today; I really want to!" Minina answered:

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"Not a bit of it! I will not let you go, for you have deceived me, you who are really a finely-built man!"

In the morning Minina wrote to her parents, to let them know what a splendid husband she had. If she had refused other men, it was because heaven had reserved her for him. When his wife had written the husband wrote also, telling them that if they wanted to come they might come, not on that day, but the day after; for we are going to be married on that day, he added.

When the governor learned this, he wrote to the white authorities, announcing: "My daughter, over whom I once shed tears, is now said to be a respectable woman. Tomorrow will be her wedding-day; make ready, for we will go and visit her tomorrow."

When the sun had set Big-Head said: "Ring, my ring, ring of my father! Let there be red money and white money, enough to fill the whole court of my house here! Let there be barrels of brandy and gin and wine, and all sorts of things to drink . . . reaching as far as my father's door, so that every one may see clearly that I am marrying the governor's daughter!"

The father and mother-in-law arrived. They began to rejoice and to salute their son-in-law. There came Banyans, Mussalmans, Bechuana and other people, who ate the foods of the feast and gathered up the silver pieces. When they had finished eating the father of Big-Head, his father-in-law, began to thank him.

"Truly, my son," he said, "heaven is on your side! I saw, to be sure, when he was born, that he was born without legs . . . but he came into the world knowing already how to write! Now I say that that is the work of heaven!" The father-in-law added: "It is well, my son. I am happy because of that which put me in ill humor before. I said: 'When someone marries my daughter, he shall govern the country, and I will become a

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child again.' Let us return together to the town." Big-Head refused, saying: "No, I will stay here, and return alone to the house."

When they had gone there were left only the people drunk with brandy and with the other drinks they had taken. When the time came to go to sleep Big-Head came out and said: "Ring, my ring, ring of my father . . . let this fine house disappear!" It disappeared with all the things in it. Only his wife and his mother were left. They set out and came to the town. When they were there Big-Head said: "Ring, my ring, ring of my father . . . let there rise up a large house with many rooms one above another, and let it be all plastered with golden pieces . . . let this be my house, and on the other side let there be another house all plastered with gold pieces, and let that be my mother's house." And these houses really appeared.

In the morning, when people came to go to work, they looked up and saw these houses, which were so splendid that they frightened them. They were so frightened that they ran away. Then the masters who had sent them out to work came together and said: "The workmen have gone away. They were frightened by the splendour of those houses here. Shan't we all die of hunger, now?" But the father-in-law, who knew the miracles his son-in-law could accomplish, said: "Don't be afraid! That is the governor who is going to reign over the country, who has just arrived!"

Then Big-Head, and Minina his wife, dwelt in all the honours of royalty.

Such is the end of this story.

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100. THE SELF-SACRIFICE OF YAMADOU HAVE
(Khassonke)

About four hundred years ago the Peuhls who were descended from Diadie founded a village called Bambaro, which took its name from a neighbouring mountain. Little by little this village grew in importance, and soon counted three hundred and thirty-three arrows, or warriors. The Tomaranke watched with a spiteful eye the quick prosperity of these newcomers, and pushed by jealousy and avarice, declared war on them.

The Peuhls were still very few in number, but in spite of this they determined to put up a strong resistance. A marabout from Sourama Toran, who was later to found the kingdom of Bundu and who, at that time, was travelling in the upper Senegal for self-instruction, came to Bambaro. He was named Malick Sy. He offered to make the Peuhls a charm which would insure their victory in spite of inferior numbers. "But," he added, "you must agree to the condition I put to you . . ."

"Speak!" said the Peuhls.

"This is my condition: you must fasten this charm to the point of an arrow. In the beginning of the battle one of you whom I already know, a member of the family of Diadie and one of the best-beloved of your citizens, will shoot this arrow in the face of the enemy. He will be killed in the battle, but, at this price, I will promise you victory."

Each in turn then offered himself for the fatal honour, but Malick Sy remained immovable until a young man of the name of Mamadou or Yamadou Have stepped forward. Then the marabout said: "This is the man for whom I have waited."

"That is well," said Yamadou to the Peuhls. "But since

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I offer myself up for your safety, I shall ask you in return to agree to my wishes."

There were four Peuhl tribes there: the Diallo, the Diakhiti, the Sidibi and the Sankari. All gave their consent.

"The marabout," Yamadou continued, "has said that, by virtue of this talisman, I shall die tomorrow for the salvation of my race. I am ready, but I have three children: two boys and a girl. The first is Sego Dohi, the second Mamadou Dohi and the third Sani Dohi. Dear Peuhls, I confide them to you, they and their children! I demand that their descendants shall command the Peuhls of Khasso. I desire that they shall marry wives of your own race. Be it understood that I speak only of those who are free and can marry without infringing the laws of Allah."

The Peuhls one and all declared that it should be done according to his wishes.

It was at the lake of Tombi-Fara that the conflict took place between the Peuhls and the Malinki.

In the beginning of the action Yamadou Have flung himself, arrow in hand, in the midst of the enemy and attacked them. He fought valiantly, and fell only at the moment when the Malinki took flight. And so the marabout's prediction was fulfilled. The victory was with the Peuhls. Their adversaries lost their king, and their army was destroyed.

Peace was assured for many years and the Peuhls acquitted their debts towards the hero's children. They brought them up with every consideration. Though they poisoned Mamadou Dohi on account of his intolerable arrogance they made Sego Dohi their king as soon as he reached majority, and assured the supreme power to his descendants.

From Sego Dohi are descended Mojaci Sambala, chief of Medina; Diourha Samba, who with Paul Holl was one of the

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defenders of this city; Kinti Sambala, ally of France and the interpreter Alfa Sega.

Another descendant also is Hava Demba, who was an ally of the emir Abdul Rhadi in the Diolof war in the time of Napoleon I.

101. THE SPAHI AND THE JINN (*Ouolof*)

This story comes from Amadou Diop.

There was a spahi named Mandoye N'Gom, a spahi of the second class who slept with his wife at N'Dar Touti. One night when he was in his hut, he was deceived by the moon. He woke at two in the morning, and thinking it was already daylight because of the extreme brilliance of the moonlight he woke his wife saying: "Come, get up and make my coffee!"

"Ah, Mandoye N'Gom," she answered, "it is still too early!"

"That doesn't matter to you! Come, get up!"

The wife didn't want to get up. She refused absolutely.

So then Mandoye made his coffee for himself. He drank it, then, taking his riding-whip, he went out, declaring that he would certainly be late for the roll-call.

He ran as far as the civil prison. There he slowed down and walked. He took out a quid of tobacco to fill his pipe, and so reached the mosque of N'Dar.

Suddenly a young lady rose up before him, barring his path. She rose up before him all naked, with only a girdle of glass beads. "My dear friend," she said to him, "give me a quid of tobacco!" "I have no time," Mandoye replied. "I would do so willingly, but I am in too much of a hurry. If I stop now I shall miss the roll-call."

The young lady prevented him from passing. "You shall not pass!" she said. "I must have my quid of tobacco!" And she began to fool about, and tried to kiss the spahi.

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"What!" said Mandoye. "It is barely daybreak yet, and she asks me for tobacco!"

The young lady wouldn't let him pass. He gave her a good whip-cut across the face. The girl began to cry. She cried "Hoo! Hoo!" just like a boat-siren. She ran away. "Ah," said Mandoye, "she just came to annoy me! She was no woman; she was a jinn!"

He went on to the barracks. There he stood in the courtyard crying "Hoo! Hoo!" The second officer came to him.

"Mandoye, have you gone crazy? You come here to the barracks at two in the morning howling like a jackal! You'll get four days of arrest tomorrow morning, you mark my words!"

But Mandoye could not speak. He had gone crazy. The second officer and the *brigadier* caught hold of him and dragged him up the stairs. He said then that he had seen something extraordinary. They put him to bed and someone stayed to keep watch over him.

The next day at eight in the morning they took him to the hospital. He spent a week there, and began to get better and to talk, for his wife brought him charms and native medicines that she brought into the hospital hidden under her clothing. She nursed him like this for eight days, and he recovered.

The doctors did not know how he had been taken ill like that. They came, felt his arms and said that he was better.

The marabouts, who are wise, said: "It was a jinn that did it."

102. THE JEALOUS DEVIL (*Bambara*)

In the Bambara country there is a region called Baninko on account of the Baninko river which crosses it before emptying itself into the Diolaba (Niger) not far from Bamako, about three days' march from that town.

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In this country of Baninko is a village called Tiendougou. It is a bigger village than Faranah, and is quite near the Baninko river. A man of this village, called Bandiougu Koulubali, went one day to his lougan. On the way he met a devil-woman, who had seen him from the tree where she was hiding, and taken a fancy to him. She thought she would have no trouble with him because, like all devil-women, she was very beautiful; and besides, men are not as a rule hard to make love to.

So she went to meet him, quite simply. "Where are you going?" she asked him. "I am going to my lougan," Bandiougu answered.

"Well, I would like to have you for my lover."

And the young man said: "I ask nothing better, for you are very pretty!"

Bandiougu laid his gun on the ground, for he always carried it with him, in case he came upon a deer. He began to joke. He and the devil-woman did what is usually done in these cases, and the conversation was drawing to an end when all at once the devil arrived on the scene. Enraged at the spectacle before him, he gave the man a good blow with his staff. You can imagine this didn't please the devil-woman; she began to insult her husband and quarrel with him. Bandiougu took advantage of this to run away as fast as he could, leaving his gun behind. The devil picked it up for himself.

But ever since that day this particular devil has become furious, just like a crazy person. As soon as he sees anyone from the village he hits out at them like a madman. He even killed a small woman, for he was too furious to avenge himself in any other manner.

You ask me what these devils are like. I have never seen one, but those who have seen them say that they have long hair, so long that they gather it up into a cushion behind them to

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sit on. Some are big, others small, but they all have four eyes, two in the usual place and two in their forehead. That is all that I know. Don't forget my reward!

103. THE MOUNOU OF THE FALEMI (*Torodo*)

There is in Bondu a village called Debu. Near this village flows the river Falemi. There is a gully there half a mile in length. No boat can pass this spot, even a small canoe, for the bogy breaks them all. As for drawing any water there, you must not even dream of it.

The water bogies who spy on the people passing by are known by the name of "mounou." They look very much like human beings. They are of different colours: black like us, red like you, and even yellow and green. Both men and women have long hair, like the wives of Syrian contractors. They have no thumbs on their hands. They once caught one of these mounous and took it as far as Bakel. The commander of the post, named Pinel, kept this bogy for a month and a half, and a number of people saw it, but at the end of that time the bogy died.

At one side of the gully of which I am speaking there was a lougan belonging to Oumar Fano, a native of Debu. Every night the bogy came there to steal millet. The owner of the lougan said: "Tomorrow I will see for myself who comes and steals my millet like this during the night."

He dug a hole in the ground fifty centimeters deep and a little longer than his body, and over this he put a little roof of straw so that it could not be seen. At nightfall he lay down in this hiding place. Towards midnight a number of bogies came out of the water and began to gather the millet. When Oumar saw that the robbers looked like human beings he laid

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his gun aside, determined not to fire upon them. But as one of the young girls of the party, by accident, came within reach of his hand, he caught hold of her by her foot and held her in spite of her cries. The other mounous ran away and dived hastily into the water. After binding his captive Oumar took her home, and she followed him without much resistance.

Oumar kept her in his hut as his wife. She worked well, and did all that he told her. But she spoke to no one, not even her husband. In the house she neither ate nor drank. She conceived a child by her husband.

About this time a neighbour came to see Oumar Fano.

"What?" he said to him. "You keep a wife who will neither eat nor speak nor drink? If I were you I would take her back where I got her from."

"I will do so tomorrow," Oumar declared.

The evening after, in fact, he led her to the bank of the Falemi.

"From what part of the stream did you come? Show me." She pointed with her finger to a spot in the river. Then Oumar took her hand; they went into the water together, and when it reached their knees he said to her: "Return to the place you came from."

The mounou waded slowly in till the water reached her chest. Then she turned towards Oumar. "You are unlucky!" she said to him.

"Why?"

"You kept me in your house for two years, and during that time I served you as your wife. And now you are angry with me. All the same you must consider that if you kept me with you it was because I wanted to stay. Now I have a child by you, and you cast me off. If you had kept me until the child was born I would then have begun to talk to you, and I could have

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taught you many things. Now, thanks to your impatience, everything is over. Farewell!"

She disappeared, and he went back to his hut. He never saw her again. She never came back.

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